Gracians Manual

PQ6398
.G308
1934

Martin Fischer

Library of The Theological Seminary

PRINCETON · NEW JERSEY

FROM THE LIBRARY OF THE

REVEREND JESSE HALSEY, D.D.

PQ6398
.G3 O8
1934

A Truthtelling Manual and the Art of Worldly Wisdom

ORACVLO MANVAL, Y ARTE DE PRVDENCIA,

SACADA DE LOS AFORISMOS que se discurren en las obras de Lorenço Gracian.

PVBLICALA DON VIcencion Iuan de Lastanosa, [illegible] Y la dedica.

AL EXCELENTISSIMO Señor Don Luis Mendez de Haro.

Con licencia, en Madrid, por Maria de Quiñones, año de 1653.

A Truthtelling Manual and the Art of Worldly Wisdom

1962
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

being a collection of the aphorisms which appear in the works of

BALTASAR GRACIAN y Morales

of the Company of Jesus, and Reader in Holy Scripture in the College of Tarragona

immediately translated for the understanding from a 1653 Spanish text

by

MARTIN FISCHER

doctor, and professor in the University of Cincinnati

CHARLES C THOMAS
Springfield-Illinois · Baltimore-Maryland

Copyright, 1934, by CHARLES C THOMAS

All rights reserved including the right to reproduce this book or parts thereof in any form

THE SCIENCE PRESS PRINTING COMPANY
Lancaster, Pennsylvania, U. S. A.

To the memory of

EDMUND MICHAEL BAEHR

"for a reader is in no danger where the man of discernment has discovered a safe port. So it seems to me."

from the seal of approval of Father Alonso Muñoz of Otalora of the Lesser Clergy, censor of the Supreme Tribunal of the Inquisition.

To the Reader

To the just no laws, to the wise no counsel, yet none has known so much that it sufficed him. For one thing must you thank me, and another forgive me—that I should give the name of Oracle to this epitome of life's rules, for such it is in its sententiousness, and in its conciseness. There is here offered you in one happy volume all the twelve of Gracian, each so cherished that his MAN OF DISCERNMENT *had hardly appeared in Spain, before it was issued in France, translated into her tongue, and printed at her court. May this volume serve as the menu card of reason at the feast of the intellectuals, and thus as a register of the choice morsels being served in all the other works, to the end that their genial wisdom may be enjoyed more widely.*

D VINCENCIO IUAN DE LASTANOSA

Introduction

I

GRACIAN wings across some fifty odd years of history like the flight of a Mother Carey's chicken. Out of a gray obscurity, he flashes into the visible sky—black, swift, unafraid, screaming his song. An international book of knowledge has it that he appeared "toward the end of the 16th century"; painful German research debates 1601; the Spaniards themselves, sure of what is of no importance anyway, dogmatize on 1604. None seems to know the month of his birth or the day, January eighth being a moment derived by calculation.

Calatayud is given as his birthplace, though Belmonte, a village near there, has become official. At eighteen Gracian became a member of the Society of Jesus and from that time on he was, what we might call today, a university man. The hu-

manities, scripture, theology and philosophy are mentioned as the subjects of his teaching, and, for most of his life, the Jesuit College in Tarragona was the place of his labors. How well he knew his subjects may be deduced from his writings. A goodly number of them must have adapted themselves to the times, his Government, his Order and the Church, for they brought him no trouble, no distinction and are forgotten. Those that plagued him were some seven volumes which in the main were salvaged, edited and published by his friend Don Vincencio Juan de Lastanosa "without the permission of Gracian but not without his consent" as the commentators have it. Their titles are EL HEROE (THE MAN OF DISTINCTION), EL POLITICO DON FERNANDO EL CATOLICO (THE POLITIC FERNANDO), AGUDEZA Y ARTE DE INGENIO (WIT AND WAY), EL DISCRETO (THE MAN OF DISCERNMENT), *and* EL CRITICON (THE MONITOR). *The first of these is said to have appeared in 1630, certainly not*

later than 1637. Gracian was then in his twenties or still early thirties. The rest filled up a succeeding score of years, THE MONITOR *weaving through Gracian's last ten. This three-volume work (which might better perhaps be entitled* THE CENSOR *or* A WOULD-BE CRITIC*) is easily likened to Bunyan's* PILGRIM'S PROGRESS *which it antedates some thirty or forty years. Its first part (1650) is for "the spring of childhood and the summer of youth," and the second (1653) for "the autumn of adult manhood." The appearance of the latter is emphasized because it began to bring Gracian trouble. Because of it he seems to have been warned not to write further. A third part, nevertheless, made the light of day in the same year "for the winter of old age." But* vejez *connotes also senility, peevishness and decay. At any rate, Mother Carey's chicken—never known to fly inland—through wind and circumstance was driven there. He failed to continue as rector of his*

Jesuit College, the chair of Scripture was taken from him, and he was ordered into the provinces. The Provost General wrote to the Provincial in Aragon: "Watch him, keep him in sight, at unexpected moments look into his cell and his papers and allow him nothing under lock and key therein." While in this state he died (December sixth, 1658) *in the village of Tarazona in the province of Zaragoza, far from the place of his birth and still farther removed from the province of Tarragona and the place of his life's labor.*

THE MONITOR *is an allegory, in which Critico and Andrenio wander over the earth in search of happiness. Up the hill of life, torn by conflicting desires, they encounter falsehood and justice, the vulgar and the princely, are enchanted by sham, get into France by use of a golden club, engage in discourse with all the philosophers of the world, seek virtue, encounter envy and, toward the end, disease and death. They discover*

immortality, but as to the rest, including happiness, the reader is left in doubt unless he, too, is willing to travel the road of virtue and of courage.

It is easy to imagine that Gracian was simply too sharp for his time, or for succeeding times, as Aristophanes or Doctor Swift or Voltaire, and in the same fashion. A thinker, a wit, a pen like a rapier—and the combination could not mean less than a world in arms against it. The Provincial and the General of the Order were, after all, only Gracian's employers and did they not, as school superintendents, or holier men, have to meet a protesting public? Just what should a good Christian do about a brother who in the same breath advises youth to devote its study to Plato and the Scriptures, and who makes Latin philosophers and saints to wander in the same garden? What can be the vote of a surging democracy which an adversary pictures as bulls, wolves, foxes

and serpents? What must the politician think of Fortune whose arms are not her own but those of the Church and the State? What have the censors of books to say when themselves brought upon the carpet; and what becomes of Christian doctrine when great men—and by indirection no others—are alone found to be immortal?

The ORACULO MANUAL Y ARTE DE PRUDENCIA *that is here translated is not designated as the eighth of Gracian's volumes because it was created out of the rest. More, however, appears in the* ORACULO *than can be traced back to the enumerated works of the master. New paragraphs and new ideas evolve. Credit for them must perhaps be given to Lastanosa who, while again appearing as Gracian's publisher, may well have been in this volume as in the earlier, much of a Boswell also. His address to the reader seems to prove this, for its brevity, its form and its total spirit are either tinctured by Gracian—*

or else much of Gracian must have been tinctured by him. In this paragraph Lastanosa counts the works of his friend as twelve; what became of the missing five is lost in the clouds of history. If, perchance, they existed as manuscripts, nothing is left of them now, for not even their titles, except in two instances, have come down to us.

There is another volume by Gracian —his last (1655), *and written apparently in the dark year preceding his banishment into the provinces— which in content bears no relation to the already cited texts. It is his* EL COMULGADOR (THE COMMUNION RAIL), *a collection of "divers meditations for those about to take Holy Communion, to enable them to prepare themselves to receive it and to obtain grace." It is from the pen of the Father Baltasar Gracian while all the rest are credited to one Lorenço Gracian, for whom there is no birth record. Baltasar is, therefore, the true praenomen of our Gracian, the other being a cloak. The key to the mystery is*

contained in the dedicatory and introductory notes to the Meditations. The volume is inscribed to Elvira Ponce de Leon, the Marquesa de Valdueza, to whom the author refers for her previous interest in his EL HEROE, *his* EL DISCRETO *and the* ORACULO; *while in the note to the reader appear these significant words: "Of the various books of which I have been made the father, this alone do I recognize as mine and call legitimate, issuing this time from my heart more than from my mind."*

The estimates of Gracian as man or philosopher or writer run from the extremes of praise to the extremes of condemnation. His prose is the worst or the best in Spanish; his philosophy is commonplace or the renascence of pessimism; he was a shallow man of his times or an earnest student of the ways of getting heaven tied to earth. Himself, he praises the golden mean and that perhaps best characterizes him. The ORACULO *is not food for babes and perhaps not philosophy for*

sages. But it is good spice—even though coca leaves may not be eaten for lettuce nor spirit be drunk raw.

II

Of the complete "works" of Gracian that have come down to us, the ORACULO MANUAL Y ARTE DE PRUDENCIA *is that collection of three hundred paragraphs excerpted therefrom which his friend and editor Don Vincencio Juan de Lastanosa published for him. Issued late in the life of Gracian they represent the very heart of the man and, polished as they must have been by time and labor, the jewels of his soul. The* ORACULO *has been translated so often and into so many different languages that its reissue in English might seem to demand apology. And yet this is hardly so, for, frankly stated, all the translations (with the exception of Schopenhauer's into German) are so far removed from the Spanish original that simple justice to a man who was, would prove excuse enough for any new trial. Almost every translation of Gracian is but a translation from*

another translation—a matter carried to such ridiculous lengths that one of the German texts is translated from the Italian, itself translated from a French text which, corrupted in the extreme, derives from the Spanish; or else the translation comes out so distorted through the omissions, the emendations or the freightings of theological and scholastic bias that every semblance to the original picture is lost.

The pages that follow are a straightforward attempt to express in English the thoughts of the ORACULO. *In the original its three hundred paragraphs are not numbered, not emphasized in their first phrases, and carry no notes. Numbers and italics appear in the first* (French) *translations and have been carried over into nearly all the rest. Only the numbers are continued in this. The notes appear early in the body of the translated texts or as ever-growing appendices to every page. They do nothing but mar the sequence of Gracian's own*

mental flow. They have, therefore, been omitted, thus to make it easier for the reader to discover for himself what was the merit of Gracian. The punctuation follows the original which though differing from that of the modern grammarian is perfectly clear. I have made every effort to hold to the word, to that style of Gracian's which made famous a whole epoch of Spanish literature, and to the spirit of this thinker, thus attempting that impossible of the French wit who believes that translations are, like women, if true, rarely beautiful, and if beautiful, rarely true.

The apostrophes of Gracian are clipped, almost stenographic. They will not as such make appeal to a swift-reading public. But even by the slower-minded the volume, though small, cannot be read through at a sitting. And his words are barbed—at once to punish or to goad.

A Truthtelling Manual

EVERYTHING today has its point, but the art of making yourself count for something the greatest: more is demanded to produce one wise man today, than seven formerly; and more is needed to deal with a single individual in our times, than with a whole people in the past. 1

Mind and spirit. The two poles upon which rest the firmament of our faculties: the one without the other, a happiness by half: mind is not enough, spirit is necessary. The lot of a fool, to fail in his calling, professional, commercial, political, social. 2

Maintain an air of uncertainty about your business. Admiration for the new is what bestows value upon the accomplished. To play with cards exposed is neither useful, nor in good taste. Create anticipation by not declaring your 3

purpose, and especially where the height of your office commands public attention display a bit of mystery about everything, and by it further the respect in which you are held: even when you show your hand escape the obvious; just as in the daily round you do not disclose your inner self to everyone. A prudent silence is the sacred vessel of wisdom. Purpose declared was never highly esteemed and commits itself to criticism in advance; and should it fail, the misfortune is doubled. Imitate, therefore, the ways of God in order to keep those about you watchful, and alert.

4 Wisdom, and courage with it make great: they make immortal because they are: each is as great as his mind, and to him who knows, everything is possible. A man without knowledge, a world in darkness. Understanding, and will, they are the eyes and the

hands; a mind without courage is dead.

Create dependents. The idol is not created by the workman, but by the worshipper; he who knows, desires more that men shall need him than thank him. To hold them expectant is the art of the courtier, to rely upon their thankfulness, the art of the peasant, for the first remembers as the second forgets. More is to be gained from dependence than from courtesy; he shortly turns his back upon the well who has drunk his fill, and the squeezed orange falls from a golden salver into the dung. When dependence goes, decent deportment goes, and with it, respect. Let it be a lesson and the first from experience, to keep hope alive but never satisfied, remaining necessary always even to the crowned head; but do not carry this to the point of silence that he may commit error, or so far as to

make incurable the mischief of another, for your personal profit.

6 A man at his best. You are not so born: strive daily to develop yourself in your person, in your calling, until perfection is attained: the fullness of your every gift, of your every faculty. You will know it in the improvement of your taste, in the clarification of your thinking, in the maturity of your judgment, in the control of your will. Some never attain the perfect, something always being lacking, and others are late in coming to themselves. The man complete, wise in speech, wise in action, is admitted, yea, he is even welcomed into that rare fellowship of those who understand.

7 Avoid outshining the master. All victory is odious but victory over the master, either the part of stupidity, or of fate. Superiority has always been detested, and most

thoroughly when greatest. A little care will serve to cloak your ordinary virtues; as you would hide your beauty, in careless dress. Some will deign to take place after you in matters of luck or of heart; but in intelligence, none, least of all a sovereign: for this is the sovereign attribute, wherefore any attack upon it is a crime against majesty. They are kings and they wish to be such in what is most kingly; they may abide being helped; but not surpassed, wherefore let advice given them appear more a jog to what they forgot, than a light to what they could not find. The stars in happy fashion teach us this lesson, for even though her children and bright, they are never so froward as to outshine the sun.

A man without passion, the pledge of the greatest loftiness of spirit which by its very superiority redeems a man from the yoke of 8

vagrant and vulgar externals. There is no greater mastery than the mastery of self, and its passions, for it amounts to the triumph of free will; but even where passion overcomes the individual, it must not dare to touch his office, especially if it be a high one; this is the best way to spare yourself grief, and yet the shortest way to a good reputation.

9 Belie in yourself the weaknesses of your country. Water partakes of the qualities, good or bad, of the seams through which it flows; and man of the climate into which he is born. Some owe more to their country than others because a happier zenith lay above them. There is no nation, even of the most cultured, without some inborn defect which its neighbors will not at once strike upon, either for their caution, or their comfort. A commendable skill to eradicate such national weaknesses in your-

self, or at least, to hide them: thus are you made unique among your kind, for what is least expected is esteemed most highly. There are weaknesses also of race, of rank, of profession, and of age, which, if gathered together in one individual, and not curbed, yield an intolerable monster.

Fortune and fame: the one as fleeting as the other is lasting. The first for this life, the second for the next: the one against envy, the other against oblivion: good fortune is desired and may perhaps be wheedled, but fame must be won; the wish for fame is born of quality; Fama was and is the sister of the giants; and she follows only the extraordinary, either the prodigies, or the monsters, that men acclaim, or hate. 10

Live with those from whom you can learn; let friendly intercourse be a school for knowledge, and so- 11

cial contact, a school for culture; to make teachers of your friends is to join the need of learning to the joy of converse. Happiness among the understanding is mutual, rewarded for what they say by the approval they receive; and for what they hear, by what they learn; ordinarily it is personal interest that draws men together but here it is glorified. A man of understanding seeks out the houses of those true noblemen which are more the stages of an heroic than the palaces of vanity. There exist men in this world, known to the discerning, who in their bearing are veritable exemplars of every greatness and whose train, even, constitutes a courtly academy of art and of learning.

I 2 Nature and art: the material and the workmanship. There is no beauty unaided, no excellence which does not sink to the barbarous, unless saved by art; it re-

deems the bad and perfects the good. Nature commonly forsakes us at her best; wherefore, take refuge in art. The best in nature is raw without her, and the excellent lacks half, if it lacks culture. Without culture every man is a clown and needs, no matter what his attributes, polish.

Accomplish your ends, sometimes indirectly, and sometimes directly. Life is a struggle of man against man's malice, in which sagacity comes to grips with the strategy of design. It never does the indicated, yea, it aims in order to deceive; the fanfare is in the light but the execution is in the dark, the purpose being always to belie. Intention is revealed to mislead the attention of the adversary, when it is changed to gain the end by what was unexpected. But insight has perspicacity, is wary, and waits behind its armor: sensing always the opposite of what it was

to sense, and recognizing at once the real purpose of the trick; it allows every first hint to pass, lies in wait for a second, and even for a third. The simulation of truth now mounts higher by glossing its deception and tries through truth itself to falsify: it changes the play in order to change the trick; and makes the real appear the phantom: founding the greatest fraud upon the greatest candor. But wariness is on watch seeing clearly what is intended, and uncovering the blackness that was clothed in light: recognizing that design most artful which looked most artless. In such fashion is the wiliness of Python matched against the whiteness of Apollo's penetrating rays.

I 4 The substance, and the form. The thing does not suffice, form as well is required. Bad form spoils everything, even justice and reason; while good form supplies

everything, gilding the No, sweetening the truth, and perfuming decay itself: the how has much to do with things, and a little manner is the thief of the heart; good deportment is the gala dress of life, and in singular fashion the pledge of a happy ending to everything.

Have helpful spirits about you. 15
The good fortune of the mighty; that they can surround themselves with men of understanding who protect them from the dangers of every ignorance, who disengage them from the snarls of every difficulty. A singular distinction, to be served by the wise; and better than the barbarous taste of Tigranes, he who used captive kings as servants. A new kind of lordship and of the best in life: by art to make subjects of those whom nature placed above you. Knowledge is long, and life is short, and he who does not know, does not live. Peculiarly smart, therefore,

to learn without effort and much from many, being taught by all. Later, in the assembly this man speaks for the many, for through his lips there speak all the sages that he drew upon for counsel; thus does he gain the title of oracle through the sweat of others. These superior souls first choose the lesson: to teach it later as a quintessence of wisdom. But he who cannot manage to have wisdom in his train, let him at least attain to familiarity with it.

16 Knowledge with good intent. They assure the success of every undertaking. Good endowment joined to bad design has always yielded a monster. Evil intent, it is the venom of every perfection and, supported by knowledge, a poison more subtile; an unholy sovereignty, that which devotes itself to destruction! Science without undertsanding, compounded madness!

Change your style; not always in the same fashion, in order to divert the attention, and especially if you are being rivalled. Not always directly, or they will know your course, anticipate you, and even frustrate your purpose. It is easy to kill the bird on the wing that flies straight; not that which turns. Nor always indirectly, for that trick is learned after the second trial. Malice is ever on the watch and much thought is necessary to outwit her; a gambler does not play the card which his opponent expects, much less that which he desires. 17

Industry, and Minerva. Without both, no distinction, and with both, this in the highest degree. Mediocrity gets further with industry, than superiority without it. Reputation is bought for the price of labor, and what has cost little is worth little. To attain even the highest posts, many have lacked 18

only industry; rarely has their talent been insufficient. To prefer to be a second in a high position to being a first in a low has good excuse; but to be satisfied with being a second in the lowest, when able to be a first, has none. Well, talent and art are both called for, but industry sets the seal.

19 Do not enter when too much is anticipated of you. It is the misfortune of the overcelebrated, that they cannot measure up to the excessive expectations of them afterwards: never can the actual attain the imagined: for to think perfection is easy, and to materialize it, most difficult: the imagination weds the wish and together they always conjure up more than reality can furnish. For however great may be a man's excellencies, they will not suffice to satisfy what was imagined of him, and when men see themselves cheated in their extravagant anticipations,

they turn more quickly to disparagement than to praise. Hope is a great falsifier of the truth; let the intelligence put her right by seeing to it that the fruit is superior to the appetite: sound principles of faith, to excite anticipation without endangering the object of your appearance: a better exit, when the actual transcends the imagined, and is more than was thought. But this rule fails in the case of evil men, for exaggeration overbuilds them also, so that when this is reduced amid applause, what was feared as the acme of villainy comes to appear as something tolerable.

A man of your century. Great men are a part of their times. Not all were born into a period worthy of them, and many so born failed to benefit by it; some merited a better century, for all that is good does not always triumph; fashions have their periods and even the 20

greatest virtues, their styles: but the philosopher has one advantage, he is ageless; and should this not prove his century, many to follow, will.

21 The art of being lucky. There are rules to luck, for to the wise not all is accident; try, therefore, to help luck along. Some are satisfied to stand politely before the portals of Fortuna and to await her bidding; better those who push forward, and who employ their enterprise, who on the wings of their worth and valor seek to embrace luck and effectively to gain her favor. And yet, properly reasoned, there is no other way to her but that of virtue and attentiveness: for none has more good luck, or more bad luck, than he has wisdom, or unwisdom.

22 A man well-informed. The bastions of men of the world are a gentlemanly and distinguished

learning: a broad understanding of all that is going on, but in uncommon fashion, not common; they have wit or seriousness on their tongues and they know how to use either on proper occasion: for more is often accomplished through a witty remark than through the gravest argument. And common sense has availed many a man more than the seven arts, however liberal they may be.

To be flawless. The requisite of perfection, yet few live without some weaknesses, either of the spirit or of the flesh, and they are tormented by them when they could so easily overcome them. The critical judgment of another is always offended when some slight defect besmirches a heavenly set of gifts, for a single cloud is enough to obscure the whole of a sun. Such are the stains upon a reputation, which malice is ever quick to discover but as slow to

forget. The greatest of achievements would be to transform such shortcomings into adornments. By such trick did Caesar know how to cover his natural ugliness with laurel.

24 Harness the imagination: sometimes curbing her, sometimes giving her rein, for she is the whole of happiness, and sets to rights even the understanding: she sinks to tyranny, not satisfied with mere faith, but demanding works, thus becoming the mistress of life itself, which she does with pleasure or with pain, according to the stupidity that affronts her; because she makes men contented or discontented with themselves: dangling before some, nothing but the spectre of their eternal sufferings, thus becoming the scourge of these fools: and showing to others nothing but fortune, and romance while merrily laughing. Of all

this is she capable if not held in check by the wisest of wills.

Of sound understanding. The art of arts, once, to meditate; but this no longer suffices, for today one must be able to divine, in order to escape being deceived: he cannot be understanding who does not understand. There are diviners of the heart, and lynxes of the intent; the truths for which most we thirst, are but half uttered, and only the observant gets them all: in everything that you would hear, hold a tight rein on your credulity, in everything you would not hear, use the spur. 25

Discover each man's thumbscrew. It is the way to move his will, more skill than force being required to know how to get at the heart of anyone: there is no will without its leanings, which differ as tastes differ. All men are idolaters, some of honor, others of 26

greed, and the most of pleasure: the trick lies in knowing these idols that are so powerful, thus knowing the impulse that moves every man: it is like having the key to another man's will, with which to get at the spring within, by no means always his best, but more frequently his worst, for there are more unholy men in this world than holy: divine the ruling passion of a man, excite him with a word, and then attack him through his pet weakness, that invariably checkmates his free will.

27 Rate the intensive above the extensive. The perfect does not lie in quantity, but in quality. All that is best is always scant, and rare, for mass in anything cheapens it. Even among men the giants have often been true pigmies. Some judge books by their thickness, as though they had been written to exercise the arms,

instead of the mind. Bigness, alone, never gets beyond the mediocre, and it is the curse of the universal man, that in trying to be everything, he is nothing. It is quality that bestows distinction, and in heroic proportions if the substance is sublime.

In nothing vulgar. Not in taste. 28
Oh, how wise! he who was cast down because his efforts found favor with the many: the hosannas of the multitude can never bring satisfaction to the discerning. Yet there exist such chameleons of popularity, that they find their joy, not in the sweet breath of Apollo, but in the smell of the crowd. And not in mind, not taken in by the miracles of the populace, for the ignorant do not rise above marvel, so that the stupidity of a crowd is lost in admiration, even as the brains of an individual uncovers the trick.

29 A just man. He stands on the side of truth with such conviction, that neither the passion of a mob, nor the violence of a despot can make him overstep the bounds of reason. But who will be this Phoenix of impartiality? For justice knows few so completely dedicated to her. Many praise her, but not for themselves: others follow her until danger threatens: and then the false deny her, and the political betray her: for she pays no heed in her dealings to friendship, to power, or even to personal profit, and herein lies the danger of her disavowal: with plausible metaphysics the sly now leave her, for they would not offend, either their higher reason, or the state: but a man true to himself deems such dissimulation a species of treason, valuing steadfastness higher than cleverness, finding himself wherever the truth is found, and if he changes his loyalties, it is not be-

cause of fickleness in him, but because they first changed on him.

Take no part in foolish enterprises; much less in schemes more likely to injure, than to enhance, your reputation. There exist all kinds of questionable cliques, and a thinking man flees the lot. And also men of strange taste who forever marry those that wiser men have divorced: they live well paid for their singularity: and even if they attract notice, it is more by the derision than the commendation they evoke. Wherefore the circumspect individual will not allow himself to be made conspicuous even in his profession: much less ridiculous in those matters that concern his person: they need not be listed, for general disapprobation has sufficiently labelled them. 30

Know the lucky, in order to hold to them, and the unlucky, in order to 31

flee from them. Hard luck is mostly the punishment of foolishness, and no disease is so catching for the mourners: never open the door to a small misfortune, for many more always creep in behind it, and greater ones, under its protection. The great trick in cards lies in knowing what to discard: and the deuce of a suit that is trump, is more valuable than the ace of a suit that was. When in doubt, there is safety in sticking with the intelligent and the prudent, for, sooner or later, they catch up with luck.

32 Be gracious: for those who govern it is the grand manner through which to please: it is the halo of the mighty by which they gain the good will of a populace. This is the single advantage of power, that it enables the holder to do more good: those are friends who make friends. There are those, on the other hand, who can never be gra-

cious, not so much because of peevishness, as of meanness, the very opposite in everything of the divine virtue.

Know how to draw away, for if it is a great rule of life to know how to refuse, it becomes an even greater to know how to refuse yourself; either to business or to persons: there are extraneous occupations, which are the very moths of precious time: and it is worse to be busy about the trivial, than to do nothing; it is not enough for the observant that he does not obtrude; a greater need to see to it that others do not obtrude upon him. Do not belong so wholly to others, that you no longer belong to yourself, even though you may not exploit your friends, nor ask of them more than they care to give: for everything carried to excess becomes a vice, and especially in matters of the daily round: an intelligent moder- 33

ateness best holds the good will, and the respect, for it does not bruise the so precious proprieties: maintain therefore the freedom of your being, worship the beautiful; and do not give offence to the laws of your own good taste.

34 Know your chief asset, your great talent, cultivate it, and help along the others. Anyone might have attained eminence in something, had he but known his advantage; discover therefore your regal attribute; and freight it to the full: some excel in judgment, others in courage. Most men violate their Minerva, and thus rise to the heights in nothing: for what is too quick to satisfy the passion, is too late in pointing out its error.

35 Think, and most about that which is most important: all the fools get lost because they do not think: they never see the half of things, and knowing neither their loss, nor

their profit, they make little effort in either direction. Some make much of what is of little importance, or little of what is of great importance, always judging wrong. Most do not lose their heads because they have none. There are matters which should be considered with every faculty, and then be treasured in the depths of the mind. An intelligent man thinks about everything, though with discrimination, digging deepest where there are prospect, and treasure; and knowing always that more lies buried than he knows; by such means does what is apprehended become what is comprehended.

Know the measure of your luck: either to play upon it, or to get out from under it; more important, far, than to note the weather, for if he is a fool who before forty has not turned to Hippocrates for health; what greater fool, he who 36

by this time has not turned to Seneca for wisdom. It takes great skill to manage luck, at times through patience, since there is merit in patience, at times through push, for luck has moments and moods: even though they are hard to recognize, so irregular is her course. Let him who finds her propitious, strike, for luck loves the bold; and, like a dazzling woman, the young. But let him who meets her otherwise do nothing, let him retire: lest to the bad luck prevailing there be invited more from afar.

37 Know what wimbling is. For it is a fine point in human intercourse. It is done to test the spirit, and by it one may with unconcern probe the most hidden, and the deepest recesses of the heart. Sometimes it is malicious, sharp, poisoned with the juice of envy, and dipped in the venom of passion, unnoticed darts aimed to

bring down the sublime, and the estimable. Many have fallen from the favor of high or low, wounded by some trifling word: who earlier never feared a whole conspiracy of popular hatred and personal spleen. At other times it works differently, through flattery aiding, and abetting, the self-esteem. But with the same skill with which a plot is projected, let caution recognize it, and attentiveness expect it: for defence depends upon recognition, and the shot foreseen always fails its mark.

Say farewell to luck when winning: it is the way of the gamblers of reputation: quite as important as a gallant advance is a well-planned retreat, wherefore lock up your winnings when they are enough, or when great. Continuous luck is always suspect; more secure is that which changes, and which, half bitter and half sweet, is more satisfying even to the taste: 38

the more luck pyramids, the greater the danger of slip, and of collapse: for luck always compensates her intensity by her brevity. Fortune wearies of carrying anyone long upon her shoulders.

39 Recognize things when at their best, in their season, and know how to enjoy them then. The works of nature all mount to a peak of perfection; up to it they wax, beyond it they wane. Only in matters of art have few gone to the point where they might not be improved. It is the mark of cultivated taste to enjoy everything at its best: but all cannot do this, and not all who can, know how. Even the fruits of the spirit have their moment of ripeness, and it is well to recognize this, in order to value it properly and to minister to it.

40 The good will of men. To gain the popular admiration is much; but to gain its affection, more; something

depends upon the stars, but more upon effort, for while the former give birth, the latter brings development: great gifts are not enough, even when they exist, but he easily finds the way, who has found the will. Wherefore good deeds are required to engender good will: do good and with both hands; be generous in speech and more generous in deed, love in order to be loved, for true nobleness is the politic magic of the great. Turn the hand first to achievement, and then to the pen, from the blade of the sword to the blade of history, for there is such a thing as the blessing of the biographers, and it makes immortal.

Never exaggerate: a matter of great importance, to forego superlatives, in part to avoid offending the truth, in part to avoid the cheapening of your judgment. Exaggeration wastes distinction, and testifies to the paucity of your un- 41

derstanding, and your taste. Praise excites anticipation, and stimulates desire, and afterwards when value does not measure up to price, disappointment turns against the fraud and takes revenge by cheapening both the appraised and the appraiser. For this reason let the prudent go very slowly, and err in understatement rather than overstatement. The extraordinary of every kind is always rare, wherefore temper your estimate. Exaggeration is akin to lying; and through it you jeopardize your reputation for good taste, which is much, and for good judgment, which is more.

42 A ruler born. It is the hidden strength of superiority: never the issue of a pomposity, but that of a natural imperiousness. All become subject to it without knowing why, recognizing in it the hidden power of born authority. These sovereign spirits are kings

by merit, and lions by innate right, who capture the hearts, and even the minds of all about them, through the faith they inspire: when blessed with other gifts, they are born to be the prime movers of mankind, for they can accomplish more with one word, than others with a thousand.

43 Think as the few, and speak as the many. To swim against the current is just as useless for setting a matter right, as it is dangerous for the swimmer. Only a Socrates may try it: to disagree with another is deemed an insult, for it is a condemnation of his judgment: the offended soon multiply, at times because their cause, at times because their champion has been hurt; the truth is for the few, the false is for the populace, because popular. A wise man cannot be recognized by what he says in the public square, for there he does not speak with his tongue, but with

that of the general foolishness, the more so as by this means he better disguises his inner self: just so does the prudent not expose himself to contradiction, as he does not contradict; quick as he may be in judgment, so slow is he in making it public. Thinking is free, and it cannot be, nor may it be strangled; let the wise man take refuge in his silence, and when at times he permits himself to speak, let it be in the shelter of the few, and the understanding.

44 A sympathy with great men. It is the talent of the great to agree with the great: a veritable wonder of nature both because of its mystery, and because of its usefulness. It makes kindred the hearts, and the minds of men: and its effects are such as the common ignorance attributes to love potions. It not only leads to better mutual respect, but advances good will, and even inclines men to each other; it con-

vinces without argument, and gets things done without effort. It may be active, or it may be passive, but either, a happiness most sublime: a great art, to recognize, to value, and to know how to attain it, for no amount of doggedness suffices without this hidden gift.

Be shrewd, but not too shrewd. A characteristic not to be assumed, much less exposed: all artfulness must be concealed, for it is suspect, and especially that of foresightedness, which is hated. Deceit fills the world, wherefore be doubly suspicious: but without letting it be seen, for that would destroy trust in you; suspicion vexes the spirit, and cries for revenge, awakening evils of which no one dreamed. To have considered well how to proceed, is of great advantage for the day's work: and there is no better evidence of a man's good sense. The perfection of an

45

undertaking lies in the masterly sureness with which it is executed.

46 Temper your antipathies. We seem to hate with pleasure, and even before we have had a look at the qualities of the object of our hatred: and always does this inborn and vulgar aversion rise against the most eminent of men. Let the intelligence overcome it, because nothing can more demean us, than that we hate our betters: for as a sympathy with the great enhances our standing, antipathy to them only tarnishes our own reputation.

47 Avoid affairs of honor. It is the first business of prudence. Men of great capacity are not easily taxed to their limits: it takes much to drive them to one side or the other, for they always keep to the middle course of their common sense, being slow to come to a rupture, for it is much easier to get

into something than to get out of something, well. These affairs are the tempters of good sense, and it is safer to flee from them, than to win through them. One matter of honor drags in another and a worse, and things are then close to the edge of downfall. There are men who by nature, or even by nationality, are easily excited: they find it easy to involve themselves in obligations of this sort: but he who walks by the light of reason, always considers carefully. He will deem it better courage not to become ensnarled, than to win, and even should the everpresent fool bob up, he will excuse himself on the ground that he does not wish to be another.

48 A man of substance, for in such measure does he count as something. There ought always to be much more on the inside, than on the outside of everything. Some men are all front, like houses half-

finished for lack of funds, having the entrances of a palace, but the contents of a hut: there is nothing in them for which to stop, or to be stopped by, because the first greetings over, converse is also over. They enter to make their first courtesies, like Sicilian horses, but presently sink into silence, for words soon fail to flow where there is no spring of thought. They take in easily, those who are equally superficial; but not the intelligent, for as these look deeper and find nothing, the fiction is recognized by the discerning.

49 A man of insight, and of judgment. He commands the world, and the world does not command him. He plumbs at once the greatest depth; and he knows how to get at the anatomy of a soul to perfection. For him to look at a man is to see through him, and to understand him to the core. Through uncommon observation, he becomes the

great decipherer of that which is most deeply hidden. He looks sharply, sees clearly, and deduces rightly; all that he uncovers, he takes in, he grasps, he comprehends.

Do nothing to make you lose respect for yourself, or to demean yourself in your own eyes: let your own integrity be the standard of rectitude, and let your own dictates be sterner than the precepts of all law. Forego the unseemly, more because of this fear of yourself, than for fear of the severity of any extraneous authority: learn this fear of self; and there will then be no need for that imaginary monitor of Seneca. 50

A man of discernment. The most of life is that; it calls for good taste, and the best of judgment, for neither learning nor mind is enough. There is nothing perfect where there is not choice: two 51

qualities are required, the power to choose, and the power to choose the better. And yet in this, many of fertile mind, and subtile, of sharp understanding, of learning and experience, always fail: forever consorting with the worse, as though determined to go wrong, wherefore this comes to be one of the greatest gifts from on high.

52 Never to lose your head, a great achievement of the mind, never to let it out of bounds: it marks the great man, and of noble heart, for all greatness is difficult to throw off balance. The passions are the humors of the spirit, and their every excess makes sick the mind; and if the disease escapes through the mouth, it endangers the reputation. Wherefore have such mastery over self, and be so strong, that nothing, either in the greatest fortune or in the greatest adversity, can upset you, remaining su-

perior even to the admiration of this feat.

Diligent, and intelligent. Diligence quickly accomplishes what the intelligence has well thought out. Haste is the passion of fools, and as they know not the difficulties, they work without heed: wiser men, on the other hand, are likely to fail from overcaution; for of reflection is bred delay: and so their hesitation to act at such times loses them the fruits of their good judgment. Promptitude is the mother of fortune. He does much who leaves nothing for tomorrow. A magnificent motto: to make haste slowly. 53

Have strength of spirit. It is out of a dead lion that even the rabbits pull the hairs, for there is no sneering at courage; if concession is made in one instance, it will have to be made in a second, and so on even to the last: and the same ef- 54

fort required to win late, would have availed more if expended earlier. Courage of the spirit is more than courage of the body: it is like a sword sheathed in the scabbard of your heart, and ready for the occasion. It is the protector of your person: but more against the hurt of its soul than the hurt of its flesh. Many have been rich in mind, but because they were poor in this courage of the spirit, they lived as the dead, and died for what they lacked, for it is not without intent that nature has joined the sweetness of the honey with the sharpness of the sting in the bee; nerves and bones make up the body, let not its spirit be all softness.

55 A man who can wait, for it marks a great heart endowed with patience; never to be in undue haste, or excited. Be first the master of yourself, and you will thereafter be the master of others; one

must journey far through time to get to the core of anything. A prudent waiting brings season to accomplishment and ripeness to what is hidden. The crutch of time accomplishes more than the iron club of Hercules. God himself does not tame with a whip, but with time: a great truth this: Time, and I 'gainst any two. Fortune herself crowns patience with the heaviest of garlands.

56 Have good impulses: they are the fruit of a happy swiftness of the spirit: fearing neither hazard nor accident, because of their faith in their own vitality: and their alertness: some think long only to go wrong in everything afterwards; and others succeed in everything without ever having thought before. They are veritable machines which function best when under strain; they are freaks who when pushed, succeed at everything but, given time, at nothing; what does

not come to them at once, never comes, for there is nothing to which they may appeal afterwards. The quick are always well received, because their very appearance argues capacity, of their minds by their alertness, and of their labors, by their spirit.

57 That done with deliberation is done quickly enough, and better: what is made in haste is unmade as quickly; and what is to last an eternity, may well tarry another in its fulfillment: nothing arrests the attention unless it be perfect, and perfection alone makes accomplishment eternal. The mind that has depth attains immortality, that being worth most, which has cost most, for even the most precious of the metals is that most resistent to heat, and the heaviest.

58 Know how to change your front: do not show yourself in like fashion to everybody; and do not ex-

pend more energy than a business demands; waste nothing, either of knowledge, or of strength: a good falconer does not loose more birds than suffice to get the game: do not put everything into the show-case at once, or none will pause to admire on the morrow. Always keep something new in reserve with which to dazzle to-morrow, for he who thus uncovers something fresh each day, maintains the interest, and never allows the limits of his greater capacities to be discovered.

59 Make a good exit. He who enters the house of fortune through the gate of pleasure, leaves it through the gate of sorrow; and round-about: keep in mind therefore the curtain, paying greater heed to the happy exit, than to the applauded entrance. It is the fate of the unlucky to be off to a happy start, and to a most tragic finish: there is no point to the applause of the vulgar

on appearance, for everybody gets it; but there is, to the feeling which remains on exit, for those encored are rare, and fortune follows few as they leave; polite as she is to the arriving, equally discourteous is she to the departing.

60 Just in judgment. Some men are born wise: with an inborn sense of right and wrong they enter upon a prudent conduct of life, and thus half their journey to success is over: the years, and experience, develop their understanding, and so they attain a judgment most tempered: they despise all prejudice as a temptation of the spirit, especially in matters of state, which, because of their great importance, demand absolute uprightness. They deserve to have direction of the ship of state, either to steer it, or to lay its course.

61 Preëminence in what is best. The distinguishing mark among the

multitude of the perfections. No possibility of being possessed of the heroic without some attribute that is of the greatest. Mediocrities are not the subjects of applause. Only eminence in a high calling takes a man out of the common herd and places him with the number of the rare. To be excellent in a humble calling is to be something, but in something little: while it may carry much of what brings delight, it carries little of what brings fame. To be excellent in great things, is to have the character of a sovereign, it evokes the admiration, and it gains the good will.

Work with good tools. Some seek to exhibit their cleverness through the poorness of their tools: a dangerous type of self-satisfaction that merits harsh discipline. The excellence of a servant has never diminished the greatness of the master: for all the glory of what is 62

accomplished later descends upon the first cause, as, in reversed circumstances, all the disgrace. Fame walks only with principals; she never says: this one had a good servant and that one, a bad; but only: this one did well, and that one did badly. Wherefore, choose carefully, test well, for the immortality of your fame is to be entrusted to them.

63 Excellent, to be first in any line, and doubly excellent if the line is great; a great advantage to be the player of the hand, if the deal has been fair. Many a man might have been a Phoenix at his job had there not been others before him: the first in any line are crowned primogenitures by fame, and the rest must beg their bread: for however much they sweat, they cannot rid themselves of the vulgar charge of imitation. The mark of the extraordinary to have blazed new trails to glory; and in such fashion, that

the intelligence assured the success of the enterprise from the first. By the mere business of being the first in any undertaking shrewd men have made a place for themselves in the roster of the heroic. For which reason some men have preferred to be firsts in a second class, to being seconds in a first.

64 To know how to escape grief, is a profitable maxim, for it is the way to escape regret. A little prudence helps much, for she is the light of happiness, and therefore of peace. Be not the purveyor of scandal, nor yet its recipient, but forbid it entrance, much less give it aid. One man keeps his ears only to have them bathed in sweet flattery; another, only to have them deafened by the bitterness of evil gossip; for there are those who cannot live without some daily dirt, as Mithridates could not, without his poison. Neither is it the law of self-

preservation, that you must wish upon yourself a lifelong regret, in order to provide momentary pleasure to another, however close he may be to you: never sin against your own happiness, in order to give comfort to another, who gives his advice, and then does not stay: for in every situation, which spells joy to another and pain to you, this is the proper rule; it is better that he be downcast today, than that you be tomorrow, and helpless in the matter to boot.

65 Of cultivated taste. It can be cultivated even as the intelligence: the better the appreciation, the greater the appetite, and when fulfilled, the greater the enjoyment. Greatness of spirit is known by the richness of the things needed to gratify it: for it takes much to satisfy a great capacity: just as much food is required for large hunger: even so does the sublime in spirit demand the sublime in

matter. The boldest objects of nature fear this judgment of taste; and those most sure, are discomfited: few are the stars of the first magnitude, let appreciation of them be equally choice. Taste and contact have a way of going together, and the inheritance is in line: wherefore he is fortunate who may consort with those who have taste at its best. But neither should a trade be made of dissatisfaction with everything, for that is the extreme of fools, and odious in proportion to its affectation, and its intemperateness. Some would wish God to create another world, and of wholly different ideals, in order to satisfy their crazy phantasies.

66 Keep in mind the happy ending. Many lay greater stress upon a point in the way to an end than upon the happy attainment of that end: and yet the shame of failure has always outweighed any appro-

bation of the pains taken in accomplishment. He who wins, does not have to explain. Most men see nothing of the means to an end, but only the good or the bad issue thereof: and so none endangers his reputation, who accomplishes his end. A happy finish gilds everything, however unfitting the means may have been. Which explains why at times it should be the rule to offend the rules, when it is not possible by other methods to attain a happy ending.

67 Choose an occupation that brings distinction. Most things depend upon the satisfaction they give others: and appreciation is to talent what the west wind is to the flowers, breath, and life itself. There are occupations which enjoy public acclaim; and there are others, even though more important, which receive no recognition: the former because done in the sight of everybody win popular

favor: the latter, even though they possess more of the rare and the worthy, remain unnoticed, because done in obscurity; they may be venerated, but they receive no approbation. Among princes, it is the victorious who are celebrated; and it is for this reason that the kings of Aragon are so highly honored, as warriors, conquerors, and great men. Let the man of gifts find himself a place thus prized, where all may see him, and all may play a part with him, for then will the popular voice want him immortalized.

68 To jog the understanding is a greater feat, than to jog the memory: for it takes more to make a man think, than to make him remember. Some fail to strike, when the iron is hot, because they fail to see the opportunity, wherefore let a bit of friendly advice help them to see their chance. One of the great attributes of the mind is its

power to know when opportunity offers: but where such mind is lacking, many things fail to be done which might have been: on which account let him give light who has it, and let him seek it who needs to, the former with reserve, the latter, with ardor: but let it not be more than mere suggestion; such reticence is necessary, and in proportion to the stake involved of him who makes it: show your interest, and go beyond it but not too far: if you receive a No, go in search of a Yes, but with art, for in most instances nothing is won, because nothing was ventured.

69 Not the slave of vulgar moods. A great man, he who is never the victim of passing fancies. And a good rule in self-advice, to meditate upon yourself; to discover your present mood, and to prepare against it: or even to throw yourself into an opposite one, in order to come to rest, between the nat-

ural and the assumed, on the balance point of common sense: it is a first principle that in order to improve yourself, you must first know yourself, for there exist veritable monsters of moodiness, always of a different temper, and of a different mind with each; eternally enslaved by their smug intemperance, they involve themselves most inconsistently, their excess checkmating not only their will, but attacking their judgment, thus alternately defeating their purpose and their plan.

Know how to say No. Since you cannot accede to everything, or to everybody, it becomes important to know how not to accede; and especially for those who command; for here enters manner. The No of one man is more esteemed, than the Yes of another; for a No that is gilded may be more satisfying than a Yes unembellished. There are many who carry

an eternal No in the mouth with which they spoil everything. It always comes first, so that even when later they grant everything, such answer gives little satisfaction, because of the bad taste provided by the first. Refusal should never be flat, the truth appearing by degrees, nor should it be absolute, for that would cancel dependence, wherefore some remnant of hope must be kept alive, to sweeten the bitterness of the refusal. Employ courtliness to fill the void of the denial, and let pleasing words disguise the failure of action. Yes and No are quickly spoken, but they demand long consideration.

71 Not eccentric: not freakish in manner, either by nature or by affectation. A thinking man is ever the same in all he does, for upon this is founded his reputation as a man of wisdom: change in him depends upon himself and has its

causes, and its reasons; in matters of common sense mere moodiness is something abhorrent. There are those who are of different face daily, until even their judgment goes awry, in like proportion their will, and so even, their luck: what was yesterday the white of their Yes, is today the black of their No: always ruining the good opinion, and befogging the concept men had of them.

A man of decision: less obnoxious is poor execution, than irresolution; for matter in flux does not putrefy, as does matter stagnant. Some men are so incapable of decision that they need constantly to be prodded from without; and this springs at times less from a confused judgment, since theirs may be unusually clear, than from unwillingness to act. An evidence of genius to foresee difficulties; but an evidence of greater genius to be able to see the way out of such dif- 72

ficulties. Others are embarrassed by nothing, and possessed as they are of great judgment and determination, they are born for the highest posts, because their quick comprehension facilitates accomplishment of the day's business, and speeds it: whatever they tackle is soon finished, for after having set one world in order, time is left to start upon another: and inasmuch as they feel that luck is with them, they venture forth in all confidence.

73 Know the meaning of evasion. It is the prudent man's way of getting out of difficulties; with the gallantry of a witty remark he is able to extricate himself from the most intricate of labyrinths. He emerges gracefully from the bitterest encounter and with a smile. It was to this that the greatest of the great captains ascribed his power. A courteous way of saying No, is to change the conversation,

nor is there greater politeness than that of not being able to understand.

74 Not unapproachable. It is in the most populous districts that the really fierce have their being: to be unapproachable is the vice of men who do not know themselves, in that they confuse their humor with their honor: but it is not the road to popular affection that has its start in molestation. A show indeed, one of these unmanageable monsters forever making a point of his impertinent exclusiveness! Those to their misfortune under him, enter to have speech, as to battle with a tiger; as full of watchfulness, as of fear. In order to win office, such a man could get himself in with everybody, but having arrived, he would avenge himself by getting out with everybody. Because of his place he should be accessible to the many, but because of his spite, or his

meanness, he becomes accessible to none. A just punishment, to let him be, thus robbing him of his brains by robbing him of his followers.

75 Choose an heroic ideal, more as something to emulate, than as something to imitate. Examples of greatness lie about us, living texts of renown: let each set before himself the greatest in his line, not so much as something to follow, as something to spur him on. Alexander did not weep over Achilles dead, but over himself unborn, as yet, to glory. There is nothing that so thrills the ambition, as the clarion of another's fame. For that same impulse which buries jealousy, lifts up the noble spirit.

76 Not in a chronic state of mockery; the common sense of a man is to be recognized in his seriousness, for wisdom ranks higher than wit. He

who is always the buffoon, is really never the man. He puts himself in a class with the liars, in that neither is believed; not the latter, because his word is doubted; and not the former, because of his scoffing. For it is never known if what was said was weighed in the mind, which in no instance can have been much. There is nothing more banal than continuous banter. Thus some get the reputation of being witty, but they endanger thereby their reputation of being wise. The humorous may be allowed its moment, but for all the rest, the serious.

Know how to be all things to all men. A wise Proteus, he who is learned with the learned, and with the pious, pious: it is the great way of winning all to you: for to be like, is to be liked. Observe each man's spirit and adapt yourself: to the serious, or to the jovial, as the case may be, by following the

fashion, through a politic change within yourself: a veritable necessity in those who are dependent. But this great rule of life calls for rich talent: being least difficult to that man of the world whose mind is filled with knowledge, and whose spirit is filled with taste.

78 Care in execution. Fools always rush in, for all fools are rash. Their very simplicity, which at the start makes them insensible to advice, at the finish makes them insensible to disgrace. But the wise go to work with great caution; their bodyguards are watchfulness, and care: these go forward to scout out the hidden, so that progress may be made without danger: for to dash in regardless stands condemned by discretion as foolhardy, even though luck at times absolves the venturer. Go slowly where the shoals are many. Let foresight feel the way, and let caution determine the ground: there are today

great shallows in the human sea, so proceed always with the lead-line.

Of happy mind. In moderation, it is an asset, and not a liability. A bit of humor seasons everything. The greatest man plays the fool at times, for it makes him popular; only his manners are forever checked by his mind, and a proper homage paid to decorum. Some can make of a bit of wit a short cut out of every difficulty, for certain things should be taken lightly, and often the very ones which others take most seriously. He who shows himself affable, captures all hearts. 79

On guard when seeking information. We live for the most part by what is told us; it is little that we see: thus we live in the faith of others; the ear is the side door of truth, but the portal of falsehood. The truth is sometimes seen, but 80

rarely heard: on the fewest of occasions does it arrive in its elemental purity, especially if it has travelled far, for then it is always soiled by what has happened on the road: for feeling tinges with her colors all that she touches, sometimes happily, sometimes unhappily: she always leaves some kind of mark, wherefore listen cautiously to the admirer, yet more cautiously to the tattler. It requires the whole attention at such times, to discover the intent of the newsbearer, in order to know beforehand which foot he is going to put forward. With reflection examine into what may be feigned, and what may be false.

81 Know how to renew your glitter. It is the birthright of the Phoenix: even the best goes stale, and so its fame, for familiarity kills admiration, wherefore something fresh even though mediocre comes to outshine the greater virtue, grown

old. Bring about, therefore, your rebirth, in courage, in spirit, in fortune, in everything. Clothe yourself anew in shining armor, and rise again like the sun: change the theatre for your appearance, in order that your absence from the one may evoke desire, and your novelty in the other, applause.

82 Drink nothing to the dregs, either of the bad, or of the good, for to moderation in everything has one sage reduced all wisdom. Too great justice becomes injustice, and the orange, squeezed too hard, turns bitter: even in enjoyment, do not go too far. The spirit itself grows weary if worked too long, and he draws blood instead of milk, who milks too hard.

83 Allow yourself some pardonable defect; for a certain weakness at times may be the greatest evidence of strength. Envy carries its ostracisms, just as civil, as they are

criminal: it accuses the most holy of sin, because without sin; and because totally perfect, condemns it totally. It makes of itself an Argus to discover the flaws of the flawless, for its own comfort. Detraction, like lightning, only strikes the greatest heights. At such times, therefore, let Homer sleep, and let him affect some lack of spirit, or of virtue; but not of prudence, in order to appease envy, that it burst not of its own poison: wave a cloak before the bull of jealousy, to rescue immortality.

84 Know how to profit through your enemies. Learn how to grasp a thing, not by its blade which cuts, but by its hilt, which protects: especially in the battle of life. To a wise man, his enemies avail him more, than to a fool, his friends. Evil intent often levels a mountain of difficulty, which the best intent in the world could not hope to

cross. Many have been made through the greatness of their enemies. For more to be feared is flattery, than hate, since this effaces the flaws, which flattery would conceal. The man who knows makes a mirror of spite, more faithful than the mirror of affection, and foresees his shortcomings, or corrects them, for prudence grows apace, when it must live against rivalry, or malevolence.

85 Do not be the ace; the fault of all that is best, that its overuse comes to be its misuse: the cry of all for it, comes to be the cry of all against it: a great misfortune, to be good for nothing, but not a lesser to be good for everything: such men end losers in spite of all they win, and live to be as despised, as once they were desired. The aces of every kind become dog-eared through overplay, and having fallen from the high estimation in which once

they were held, they are consigned to the class of the common. The one protection against either extreme, is to hold to a middle place in the limelight, letting the superb in you reside in your qualifications, and not in your show of them; the brighter the torch, the quicker its burning, and the sooner its end; the fewer the performances, the higher the price paid for admission.

86 Forestall evil gossip. The mob has many heads, and therefore many eyes for malice, and many tongues for slander. Let it start to gossip, and the greatest reputation is sullied; let it develop a catchword, and an honored name is blotted out; the thing commonly begins in some visible defect, in some ridiculous weakness, that lends itself easily to a tale. And sometimes it is the prying malice of a rival, that feeds the general mob; for there are breathers of

malevolence, and they demolish a reputation more quickly with a jeer, than with a jibe. It is very easy to give a man an evil name, because evil is gladly believed, but it takes much to blot it out. Wherefore the man of intelligence will guard himself against such accidents, by pitting his caution against the popular insolence, for it is easier to keep out, than to get out of trouble.

87 Culture, and polish. Man is born the barbarian, and only culture redeems him from the bestial. Culture makes the man, and in its proportion. In this faith, could Greece call the rest of the world barbarous. Ignorance is rough: and nothing makes more for refinement than learning. But even this learning remains a crude affair, if sloven. Not only does our understanding require polish, but our desires as well, and especially our conduct. Some men are nat-

urally polished, of courtly dress within and without, in thought and speech, and in bodily dress, which may be compared to the bark of a tree, as their gifts of the spirit may be likened to its fruit. Others are as naturally unpolished, so that all they have, even to their good points, seems eternally soiled by something unbearable.

88 Generous in action, to attain nobility. The great man may not be small in his actions. He must not draw too fine distinctions, least of all in matters trivial: for even though it is well to take in everything that is revealed, it is not so well to seem to peer into everything. Go at the day's work in that large spirit, which is the mark of gallantry. The great law in government is tolerance; most things should be allowed to pass unnoticed, between intimates, between friends, and particularly between enemies. Every meanness is a

vexation of the spirit, and a burden to the soul. To return, time after time, to the same annoyance, is a sort of insanity, and so the way in which a man deports himself, is very likely to be the measure of his heart, and his mind.

89 A just estimate of yourself. Of your mind, of your spirit, of your judgment, of your passion. No man can be master of himself, who does not first understand himself. There are mirrors for the countenance, but none for the soul: wherefore make one out of the careful consideration of yourself, and while it may be well to forget the outer image, remember the inner, in order to fill out its defects, in order to make it better. Poll the powers of your mind, and of your will, in order to achieve something: take stock of what temper you have for the business of the day: sound your depths, and

measure your capacity for everything.

90 The art of living well. Of living abundantly! Two are done quickly with life, the fool, and the dissolute. The one because he does not know how to keep it, and the other because he does not care. As virtue is its own reward; so is vice its own punishment: for he who lives too fast is quickly through, and in a double sense: while he who rests in virtue, never dies. For the life of the spirit becomes the life of the body, and the life lived well gathers unto itself not only fullness of days, but even length.

91 Proceed only when without misgivings. The mere fear of failure in the executioner, is already its certainty in the observer, especially if he be a rival. If judgment had its doubts even in the heat of passion, it will later, when freed

from such passion, condemn utterly and declare stupid the whole enterprise. Every undertaking of which you question the prudence, is dangerous, and safety lies in leaving it alone. Wisdom does not debate possibilities: it walks only in the noonday light of the intelligence. How can any venture come off well, which even in its conception was questioned by reason? and if plans unanimously passed upon by our very souls have a way of ending unhappily, what may be expected of those conceived of a hesitant mind, and divined to be bad by the judgment?

Of better sense, I say, in everything. It is the first, and the greatest rule in work, and in speech; particularly incumbent upon those who occupy the greatest, and the highest posts: of greater weight, one grain of common sense, than a bushel of cunning. It is the high- 92

road to peace, though not so filled with cheers; even if the reputation of being wise is the triumph of fame, let it suffice you to have given satisfaction to those who have understanding, for their opinion is the touchstone of what is well done.

93 An all-round man. To be a man of many sides, is to count as many men. He makes life richer, by bestowing his wealth upon his surroundings. Variety in what is best, is the joy of life. A great art, that of knowing how to garner all that is good: and since nature has made in man an epitome of herself, by giving him the highest place, let art make him into a little universe through the exercise, and the development of his taste and of his mind.

94 Of unmeasured capacity. A watchful man will decline to be plumbed to the depths, be it of his

knowledge, or of his powers, if he would remain esteemed: let him allow himself to be known, but not to the point of being understood. Permit no one to discover the limits of your capacities, because of the obvious danger of disillusionment. Never suffer another to see through you completely: for surmise and doubt regarding the talents of any man win greater respect, than definite knowledge, no matter how great they be.

95 Know how to keep anticipation alive: always striving to feed it, by letting the much promise more, and the one achievement be the announcement only of a greater. Put not all your reserves into the first throw; the great trick is to know moderation, to dole out strength, and to dole out mind, in such fashion as to bring forward increasingly a fulfillment of what was expected of you.

96 Of conscience, it is the throne of reason, the foundation of prudence, and in its faith the attainment of every quest is made easy. It is a gift from heaven, and the most to be desired, because heaven's first, and its greatest. It is the very breastplate of armor, and so much so, that nothing else a man may lack will allow him to be called not a man, but only a richer or a poorer one. All the activities of life depend upon its influence; and all beg its good opinion, for everything must pass in judgment before it. It consists of a natural love for all that conforms most to reason, making common cause always with that which is most true.

97 Attain, and maintain a reputation, for it is the usufruct of fame. It demands hard labor, for it is born of excellence, which is as rare as mediocrity is common. But once attained, it is easily maintained. It

asks for much, but it gives more. When it rises to the point of veneration, it becomes a kind of majesty; either because of the holiness of its cause, or of its influence; but only the reputation well founded endures forever.

98 Hide your purpose. The passions are the windows of the soul. And the most practical wisdom lies in acting. He hazards defeat who plays with cards exposed. Pit the defence of caution, against the offence of the adversary; against the eye of the lynx, the ink of the cuttlefish. Even our wishes must not be known, so that they may not be met, by the one to deny them, or by another to satisfy them.

99 The real, and the apparent. Things do not count for what they are, but for what they seem; they are few who see into the depths, and they are many who are satis-

fied with first appearances. It is not sufficient even to be right if it carry the face of being wrong.

100 A man without illusions, a thinking Christian. A courtly philosopher, who does not merely appear such, much less affect to be such. Philosophy stands discredited today, even though once it was the major pursuit of the sages. The science of the thinker lives degraded. Seneca introduced it into Rome; it found favor for a time in the courts, but today it is reckoned nonsense. And yet the detection of error was ever the food of the thinking spirit, and the joy of the righteous.

101 Half the world laughs at the other half, withal that the lot are fools. Either everything is good, or everything is bad, as the vote decrees; what one sues, another pursues. An insufferable fool, he who would order the universe accord-

ing to his own plans. Bliss does not depend upon the liking of any one man: for there are as many minds, as there are heads, and as different; there is no weakness without its admirer, so be not discomfited because your ways displease some, for they will not fail to be pleasing to others: nor let their approval of them make you vain, for still others will condemn them. Proper satisfaction may be taken only in the approval of men of authority, and of those who have standing in their fields. Do not live by the sanction of any one voice, or of any one custom, or of any single period.

A maw for large slices of fortune. 102
In the great body of wisdom, an organ of no minor importance is a great craw, for every great totality must needs be composed of great parts. He will not be gorged by good fortune, who is worthy of more, for what is indigestion to

one, is only appetite to another. There are many, who turn sick whenever the food is rich, because they are naturally weak, being neither accustomed to, nor born to high society; life's business sours on them, and from the fumes rising out of their unearned distinction, they go dizzy in the head; they run great danger in their high places, and are unable to maintain themselves in them, because they lack accustomedness. Wherefore, let the really big man give evidence, that he has the capacity for even larger enterprise, and let him avoid with special care all show of anything that indicates faint heart.

103 Each, in his way, majestic. Every man's actions, even if not those of a king, should be worthy of such, and according to his station, his ways regal within the limits of his powers. Generosity of action, loftiness of mind, in everything he does, mark the king by merit, if not

by birth, for true sovereignty lies in blamelessness of conduct; a king himself may not begrudge to another a grandeur of which he is the prototype, especially in those deputed to the throne, for something of this truly sovereign quality should stick to them, only let them, not merely assume the attributes of majesty, in vain ceremony, and grow pompous thereunder, but let them materialize these within themselves.

Know what the offices hold. There is variety to them, and it takes a magistrate's mind to know their value, yet nothing calls for greater care in choice; some demand courage, and others shrewdness. It is most easy to manage in those which call merely for honesty, and most difficult in those which call for skill. With decent endowment nothing else is necessary for the former: but for the latter, all ardor may not suffice, and sleeplessness. 104

A wearying business to govern men, and these mostly cracked, or fools: for double brains are needed with those who have none. Most intolerable are those posts which require the whole of a man, for set hours, and at set tasks; better those freer from weariness, wherein the serious is joined to variety: because change refreshes the spirit. The most to be desired are such which carry a measure of independence; and those are the worst, which sweat a man to death in his human frame, and more in his divine.

105 Not a bore. The man of one business, or of one speech gets heavy. Brevity charms, and better accomplishes the daily course; it makes up in manner, what it lacks in measure. The good, when brief, is doubly good; and even the bad, when short, is not so bad. The essence is always stronger than the lees: and it is common knowledge,

that the man long-winded is rarely wise, either in what he has at disposal, or in the form of the disposal. There are men who serve more to encumber, than to adorn this world, mere tinsel that everybody pushes aside. A man of discernment will avoid making himself a nuisance, especially to the great, for they are much occupied, and it is worse to annoy any one of them, than the rest of the world put together. What is well said is said quickly.

106 Do not make a show of what you have. More offensive to boast your social position than your qualifications; to make yourself the central figure is to make yourself hated, and one should have enough of envy. Deference is the less likely to be gained, the harder it is pursued, for respect depends upon others; and so one cannot snatch but only merit it, and wait: large offices demand distinction in their

exercise, without which they are not worthily administered, wherefore maintain in them the dignity necessary to the proper discharge of their obligations: not insisting upon respect, but yourself compelling it, for all who trade upon their offices, show that they do not merit them, and that they are not big enough for the honor; if you would be important, let it be through the excellence of your talents, rather than through your position; for even a king should be worshipped, more because of his qualifications, than because of the accident of his birth.

107 Display no self-satisfaction. Live, not unsatisfied with yourself, for that is cowardice, nor yet self-satisfied, for that is stupidity. Self-complacency starts for the most part in witlessness, and ends in a blissful ignorance which even though soothing to the soul, does not maintain a name. Because un-

able to equal the great qualifications of another, you are content with some vulgar mediocrity within yourself. Always more useful and more intelligent to have misgivings about yourself, either for your better assurance that things will come off well, or for your better comfort if they come off badly; for he cannot be surprised by a turn of luck, who has already feared it. Homer himself must sleep at times, and Alexander come down from his pedestal and out of his delusion. Things depend upon many circumstances, and what was a triumph in one place, and upon that occasion, in another becomes a disgrace, but what is most unruly about this form of stupidity is that the vainest self-satisfaction goes to flower, and then buds forth all about through its seeds.

108 The shortest road to being something, to know whom to accom-

pany. The most effective means for the inculcation of manner, and of taste is contact: one thus takes on the thought, and even the spirit of others without being aware of it. Wherefore, let the intemperate join up with someone more temperate; and so with the rest of the mental attributes, that the man of moderation may be brought forth without violence: a great trick to know how to adapt yourself. The play of contrasts makes beautiful this universe, and sustains her, and if it will bring about such harmony in the physical world, it will accomplish an even greater in the moral. Avail yourself of this courteous admonition in the choice of your friends, and your fellows, so that through the meeting of the extremes, there may arise a most sensible mean.

109 Not the accuser. There are men of black mind, who would make of everything a crime, and not for

passion, but just naturally. They condemn everybody, some for what they have done, and others for what they may do. It is the sign of a mean mind, as cruel as it is vile, and they make charge so immoderately, that of motes they fashion beams with which to put out the eyes. Slave drivers in every position, they would make a galley of what was an elysium; for in the midst of excitement, they push everything to extremes. The ingenuous spirit, on the other hand, finds an excuse for everything, if not in intention, then in inattention.

Do not wait to be the sun, in its setting. A maxim of the wise, to leave before they are left. Know how to make a triumph even of your exit; for at times the sun herself when most bright, will retire behind a cloud, that she may not be seen to sink, thus to leave us in doubt as to whether she has set, or

110

has not set. Escape such accident, in order not to suffer slight; do not wait until men turn their backs upon you, that they bury you, still alive in your feelings, but dead in their estimation: the man of foresight puts his horse in the stable betimes, and does not wait to see it create laughter by falling in the middle of the race: the beauty wisely cracks her mirror when it is yet early, not to do it with impatience later when it has disillusioned her.

III Have friends. It is a second life. Every friend is something good, and something wise to his friend: and between them everything comes off well; a man is only worth, what the others will him; and that they may will him much, the way must be found to their hearts: there is no magic like that of friendly service; and the best way to have friends, is to make them: the most, and the best of

what is ours, depends upon others: we have to live, either with friends, or with enemies, wherefore try daily to make a friend, and even if not as an intimate, at least as one well disposed, that some may remain afterwards as confidants having passed through the ordeal of selection.

Gain grace; for God himself allows it to enter into His greatest designs, and gives it place. Through it is won a favorable disposition: and some have such faith in its virtue, that they hold diligence cheap, because the man alert knows well that the path of mere merit is a stony one, if he is not helped along by good will: for it eases and aids everything, not always supposing the existence of great virtues, but imposing them, like courage, honesty, learning and even conscience: and failing to see all shortcomings, because it does not wish to see them: ordinarily it springs from

112

mere likeness in material interests, as those of the body, the nation, the family, the country or the profession: but in its deeper form it is more noble: having to do then with the talents, character, fame, merit; all the difficulty lies in arousing good will, for its maintenance is easy, but good will can be won, and its power should be known.

113 Prepare yourself in fortune, for adversity. Expedient in the summer to make provision for the winter, and much more convenient; at that time good will comes cheap, and friends are plentiful; well then to garner them against bad times, when adversity shows its face, and all things fail. Gather up your friends, and the men beholden to you, for someday you may have appreciation for what today you have no place. Only the meanest are without friends even in the hour of fortune: because they dis-

avow them, and so in adversity, they are disavowed by them.

Never a rival. Every effort to win against opposition lowers the standing, for competition resorts at once to slander, in order to besmirch. They are few who carry on war in fair fashion, for rivalry lays bare the flaws which courtesy has covered over: many lived in honor, as long as they had no rivals. The heat of combat calls up, and brings to life infamies long dead, and digs up stenches forgotten, and more than forgotten: competition starts with a manifesto of slander, and calls to its aid whatever it can, and not what it should; and when at times, nay mostly, insults prove not the arms of victory, these men find a vile satisfaction in their spite, and bandy it about with so much air, that the dust of forgetfulness is shaken from old scandals. Men of good

114

will were ever men of peace, and men of honor, men of good will.

115 Accustom yourself to the defects of those about you, as you would accustom yourself to those of ugly mien, it being the best way out when you are a subordinate, for there are beasts, with whom no one can live, nor yet without. It is, therefore, the part of wisdom to get used to them as to ugliness itself, in order that on some terrible occasion you may not forget yourself. When first seen they terrify, but little by little this horror becomes less, and wisdom becomes hardened against the unpleasant, or learns how to bear it.

116 Deal solely with men of honor: such only may you involve, and with such only may you be involved. Their very rectitude is the best pledge of what they will do, even in the business of shuffling the cards, for they deal as they

seem, and so it avails more to lose with men of honor, than to win with men of dishonor, for there is no profit in villainy, because it is unbeholden to integrity; on this account there is no true friendship among thieves; nor are their protestations of friendship true, even when they seem it, for they are not made in good faith; and those without such should ever be abominated of men, for they who do not cherish honor, do not cherish virtue, and honor is the throne of virtue.

Never talk about yourself. For you either praise, which is vanity, or you reproach, which is poor spirit, in both instances evincing a guilty heart in the speaker, which gives pain to the listener: if it is to be avoided in private life, it is to be shunned even more in public office, where you speak to the crowd, and where you at once pass as a fool if you but give the semblance

117

of it. A similar weakness of mind lies in speech about those present, because of the danger of foundering on either of two rocks, that of overappreciation, or that of depreciation.

118 Gain the name of being a gentleman, for it is enough to make you loved. Courtesy is the stem of culture, a species of sorcery, and so gains the affection of everybody, just as discourtesy wins scorn, and a universal hatred; when discourtesy is born of arrogance, it is abominable; when of coarseness, detestable. Let courtesy always be too much, rather than too little, but let it not be equal, lest it degenerate into unfairness: hold to it as a matter of duty between enemies, for it exhibits your courage, costing little, and being worth much, for to show honor is to be honored. Gallantry, and honor have this advantage, they are saved through

spending, the first if practiced, the second if worn.

119 Do not make yourself an object of hatred. Do not provoke it, for even without provocation, it will come quickly enough. There are many who hate gratis, without knowing why, or wherefore; ill will has a way of outdistancing good will: for the itch in us to injure another is more potent, and swifter than the lust to advantage ourselves. Some pretend to be happy only when at outs with everybody, either because vexed, or to vex; and when hate has once taken hold of a man, it is as hard to get rid of, as a bad reputation. Men of clear judgment are feared, the evil-tongued are abhorred; the presumptuous make sick, the buffoons are detested, and the singular are left to themselves. Try, therefore, to show appreciation in order to be appreciated; and let

him who desires affection, show affection.

120 Live according to custom. Even wisdom must be in style, and where it is not, it is well to know how to feign ignorance, for thought changes with the times, and taste: do not be old-fashioned in thought, and modern in taste. The choice of the many has the vote in every field. For the time being, therefore, it must be bowed to, in order to bring it to a better level: the man of wisdom accommodates himself to the present, even though the past seems better, alike in the dress of his spirit, as in the dress of his body. Only in the matter of being decent does this rule of life not apply, for virtue should be practiced eternally: yet today it is unknown, and to speak the truth and to keep one's word, seem the marks of another age: and good men appear the creations of a good time that is past; but

they are forever loved: if by chance, some be still left, they are no longer in style, and no longer imitated. Oh, the misery of this our age, which holds virtue alien, and evil the order of the day! Let the man of conscience live as he can, not as he might wish. Let him hold as better what fortune may have conceded him than what she has denied him.

121 Do not make a business of the trivial. Just as some can make a tale out of anything, so others can make a business of everything: they always speak importantly, they take all things seriously, making of everything either a case, or a mystery. To convert petty annoyances into matters of importance, is to become seriously involved over nothing. It is to miss the point, to carry on the chest what has been cast from the shoulders. Many things which were something, by being left

alone became nothing; and others which were nothing, became much because messed into: in its beginnings it is easy to make an end of anything, but not so, later; for many a time the remedy itself brings out the disease: by no means the worst rule of life, to let things rest.

122 Distinction, in speech and in action. It makes a large place for itself everywhere, and compels respect in advance; showing itself in everything, in bearing, in speech, at times in the walk, or even in the look, and in the desire. A great triumph, thus to win all hearts, for it is not the fruit of a silly frowardness, nor of a stupid superciliousness, but of a becoming authority, born of a superior mind, and helped along by merit.

123 A man without affectation. The larger the number of your gifts, the less the need to affect any, for

such would be vulgar insult to all of them. Affectation is as distasteful to everybody else, as it is painful to him who practices it, for he lives a martyr to apprehension, and torments himself with punctiliousness, for the greatest virtues lose their merit when judged to be the children of a tricky violence, rather than those of a natural innocence, since all that is natural is always more pleasing, than the artificial. Whatever is affected will always be held foreign to him who feigns it; the better a thing is done, the less must it betray effort, because the perfect must appear as fallen ready-made from heaven; nor, in order to escape affectation, become affected in trying not to be: the man of discrimination will never exhibit his virtues, for it is through their very concealment that they awaken the interest of others. Twice great is he who

carries all his perfections within himself, and none in his own conceit, and by a contrary path thus reaches the goal of approbation.

124 Strive to be in demand. Few attain to such grace in the eyes of men, and if these be men of understanding, joy, indeed, for coldness is the rule toward those who have done; but there are ways of gaining this prize of adoration; excellence in a post, and excellence of the talents assure it, and charm of manner is efficacious, for dependence is built up of such properties, because of which it is soon discovered that the man needed the office less than the office needed the man; the posts bring honor to some men, and other men bring honor to their posts: but there is no glory in being held good, because he who succeeded you is bad, for this does not prove that you are wanted back, but only that the other is wanted out.

Not a registrar of evil. The sign of having yourself a blemished name, to have interest in the shame of another: some seek with the spots of others to cover their own, yea to blot them out, or thus to console themselves, which is the solace of fools: the breath smells badly from those who are the sewers of a city's filth, in which stuff he who digs deepest, soils himself most: few are free from some original sin, be it of commission, or omission, only, the sins of little known people are little known; let the man alert guard against being a recorder of wickedness, for it is to be a man despised, and one who even though human, is inhuman. 125

He is not a fool who commits foolishness, but he who having done so does not know how to conceal it. If your merits should be kept under seal, how much more your demerits. All men go 126

wrong; but with this difference, the intelligent cover up what they have committed, and the fools expose what they may commit. A good name rests more upon what is concealed, than upon what is revealed, for he who cannot be good, must be cautious: the sins of great men should be regarded as mere eclipses of the heavenly bodies. Let it be the mistake of friendship to confide your errors even to a friend, for were it possible, you should not disclose them to yourself; but since this is impossible, make use here of that other principle of life, which is: learn to forget.

127 A charm in everything. It is the life of the talents, the flower of speech, the soul of action, the halo of splendor itself: every other grace is the apparel merely of nature, but charm is the ornament of grace itself, showing even in the daily round; for the most part

it is a bequest of fortune, owing little to schooling, to which it is superior; being more than ease, and approaching daring, it takes unembarrassment for granted, and adds perfection of performance; without it all beauty is dead, and all grace, graceless, for it transcends courage, wisdom, prudence, majesty itself. It is the courteous way about in every business, and the polite way out of every embarrassment.

128 Of lofty ambition. The first requisite to make the hero, because it spurs him to every species of greatness, improving his taste, quickening his heart, stimulating his mind, ennobling his spirit, and dignifying his majesty: whatever it settles upon it glorifies, and even when at times the bitterness of chance brings defeat, it returns anew to the conflict, strengthened in will, even as it was frustrated in accomplishment: magnanimity,

generosity, and every heroic virtue recognize in it their source.

129 Never cry about your woes. To make lamentation discredits only you; to better purpose, to be an example of strength against passion, than one of defeat under compassion; it is to open the way to the listener, to the very thing of which you complain, and to give notice of a first insult, to make excuse for a second; many a man with his complaint of injustices past, has invited more, and by crying for help, or for pity, has merely elicited sufferance; or even contempt: better politics, to laud the generosity of one in order to lay obligations upon another; and to recite the favors done by those absent, is to compel them from those present, for this is to sell the esteem in which you are held by the one, to the other; and so a man of sense will never publish abroad, either the slights, or the

wrongs he may have suffered, but only the honor in which he is held, for it will serve better to constrain his friends, and to restrain his enemies.

Do, and exhibit your doing. Things do not pass for what they are, but for what they seem: to have worth, and to know how to show it, is to be worth double; that which is not made apparent, is as though it were not, for even justice cannot hold its veneration, where it cannot hold the appearance of justice; those who are deceived, outnumber those who are not: for it is sham that rules, and things are judged to be what they look, even though most things are far different from what they appear; a good exterior is taken as best proof of the excellence of the interior. 130

Greatness of feeling. The soul has its courage, an intrepidity and 131

gallantry of the spirit, which gives life to a heart, not found in all men, because it calls for magnanimity: its first duty is to speak well of an enemy, and to deal with him even better: it shines most brightly in moments most opportune for revenge, when, instead of neglecting them, it brings them into higher relief, converting vengeance most victorious, into an unexpected generosity. Even so it remains politic, yea, the flower of diplomacy, never affecting victory, because it affects nothing, and although merit attained the victory, modestly concealing it.

132 Know the value of reconsideration. To appeal for review, makes for safety, and especially where dissatisfaction is evident, to gain time, either to soften judgment, or to strengthen it. New reasons appear to corroborate, and to affirm the decision; if something is to be granted, then the gift well consid-

ered is cherished more than that bestowed in the rush of the moment; for what has been longed for, is always prized more highly, and if something must be refused, time gives opportunity for discovering how best, and most softly, to say No; that it be better flavored, and usually when the first heat of desire has passed off, the disappointment of a refusal is felt to be less cold-blooded; to him who demands too urgently, concession should always be made tardily, for that is a trick to catch the attention off guard.

Better a fool with the crowd, than a sage by yourself; the politicians say, that if all men are fools, no one can be counted such; but if a wise man stand apart, he must be held the fool: so it is important to go with the current: the greatest knowledge at times, to know nothing, or to affect to know nothing; we have to live with others, 133

and the ignorant make up the majority; and to live alone one must have within himself, either much of God, or much of the beast: I am strongly urged to turn this aphorism about, and say: better wise with the rest of the wise, than a fool by yourself: still, some seek distinction by making fools of themselves.

134 Possess yourself of the necessities of life twice over. It is to insure doubly your existence, for you may not depend solely upon, or be limited to, any one thing, however extraordinary it may be; everything should be had twice over, and especially the opportunities of gaining a livelihood, good will, and satisfaction. If the changes of the moon which are infinite, rest upon what is permanent, how much more should the things of this life, that depend upon a human charity, which is most brittle. Lay up against this frag-

ileness a reserve, and let it be the guiding star of life, to have in double store the means for living well, and comfortably; just as nature has given us doubly of those members which are most important, and most exposed, so let art assure us doubly of those things upon which life itself depends.

Do not carry a spirit of contradiction, for it is to be freighted with stupidity, and with peevishness, and your intelligence should plot against it; though it may well be the mark of mental genius to see objection to everything, a wrangler cannot escape being marked the fool, for he makes a guerrilla warfare of quiet conversation, and so becomes more of an enemy to his intimates, than to those with whom he will have nothing to do; it is in the most savoury morsel that the spine which gets caught hurts most, and so it is with contradiction in moments of happi- I 35

ness; such a man is a fool, destructive, who adds to the untamed within himself, the beastly.

136 Put yourself in the middle of things, to get at once at the heart of the business; most roam around, either in useless meanderings about the edge, or in the brush of a tiresome verbosity, without striking upon the substance of the matter; they circulate an hundred times about a point, wearying themselves, and wearying others, yet never arriving at the centre of what is important; it is the product of a scattered mentality that does not know how to get itself together; they spend time, and exhaust patience, over that which they should leave alone, and afterwards are short of both for what they did leave alone.

137 Let the wise man be sufficient unto himself. He who was all in

all to himself, when carrying himself hence, carried everything with him. If one all-round friend brings into your embrace Rome, and all the rest of the world: be such a friend to yourself, and you will be able to live alone: for to whom might you be beholden, when there exists no greater mind, and no better judgment than your own? Learn to depend upon yourself, because it makes for that supreme self-containment which is like unto Deity. Who is thus able to live within himself, is like the brute in nothing, like the sage in much, and like God in everything.

138 The sense to let things settle. Especially when the public, or the private, sea is most turbulent. There come whirlwinds into human traffic, storms of passion, when it is wise to seek a safe harbor with smoother waters: many times is an evil made worse by the

remedies used; here leave things to nature, or there to God: the learned physician needs just as much wisdom in order not to prescribe, as to prescribe, and often the greater art lies in doing nothing; the way to quiet the restlessness of the mob is to withdraw your hand, and let it quiet itself, for to retreat before the moment today, may be the best assurance of victory tomorrow; a spring is muddied by very little disturbance, nor does it clear by being stirred, but by being left alone: there is no better remedy for turmoil, than to let it take its course, for so does it come to rest of itself.

139 Know your unlucky days: for such there are, when nothing goes right, and even though the game change, the bad luck does not: you know them after two throws of the dice, and you retire, or play on,

depending upon whether this is such a day, or not. Even the mind has its periods, for no man is wise at all hours, since it takes luck to think straight, just as it takes luck to write a good letter, for all good things have their season, beauty not always being in style, judgment itself turning traitor, now making us too soft, now too harsh: thus anything to come off well, must be of its day. Just so does everything go wrong with some, and everything go right with others, and with less effort. All they touch stands ready, the spirit is well-disposed, the mind is alert, and their star is in the ascendant. Then is the hour to strike, and not to squander the least advantage. But the man of judgment will not let just one throw augur the day unlucky, or on the other hand, lucky, for it may have been only mischance, or happy accident.

140 Hit at once upon the good in everything. It is the opportunity of taste: the bee goes directly to the sweet for its comb, and the adder to the bitter for its venom. And so with the tastes of men, some to the good, and some to the bad: there is nothing that does not hold some good, especially if it be a book, because of the thought it may contain: but the minds of some men are of such unhappy frame, that out of a thousand good points they strike upon the lone bad, and this they trot out and carp upon, mere scavengers of the soil of other men's purposes, and minds, and mere compilers of the sins of others, which serve better as punishment for their bad choice, than occupation for their cleverness; they have a sad life of it, for they are fed constantly by the bitter, and have pasture among the weeds; far happier is the taste of those others, who in a

thousand evils at once discover the single good, which luck may have bestowed.

141 Do not be your own audience. Small profit to be pleased with yourself, if you do not please the others, and usually the general disdain punishes such self-satisfaction; he owes everybody who pays himself through himself, for to wish to be the speaker, and the auditor, does not go well; and if to talk to yourself is nonsense, to wish to listen to yourself and this before others, is nonsense twice over. It is a weakness of these gentlemen to speak to the strains of some such music as, I am about to say, or, Ahem, which is torture to those who must listen; after every sentence they strain the ear for approbation, or flattery, exhausting the patience. Inflated individuals always mouth other men's words, and as their talk goes in the buskins of arrogance,

their every word calls forth the stupid approval of a fool: Well said.

142 Never out of stubbornness hold to the wrong side, because your adversary has anticipated you, and chosen the right, for then you start already beaten, and will have to retire in disgrace; a good fight is never made with bad weapons; the opponent was clever to preëmpt the better side, and you stupid to oppose him later by taking up the worse: such stubbornness in action is more ensnarling than stubbornness in speech, for there is greater risk in doing than in talking: the vulgarity of these clowns, that they do not observe the truth, because they lie; nor yet their own interest, because on the wrong side. The man alert stands always on the side of reason, and never that of passion, either because he foresaw it from the first, or found it better after-

wards; for if the adversary is a fool he may on his own account change the play, passing over to the opposite side and so weakening his position; but the only way to drive him from the better side, is to seize it yourself, for his stupidity will make him drop it, and his obstinacy free you from your own.

Do not fall into the paradoxical, to avoid being commonplace. Either extreme discredits you. Every act, that deviates from the serious, borders upon the foolish. A paradox in essence is a species of pious fraud, which is admired because of its freshness, and its piquancy; but later when its trickiness is discovered fares so badly, that it is scorned. It is a kind of imposition, and in political matters, the ruin of the state. Those who cannot, or those who dare not, do something really great over the road of merit, repair to

143

the paradoxical, to be admired of fools, and to become the makers of prophets: it is the mark of a disordered judgment, and on this account should be forsworn by the man of prudence; and though at times it may not be founded upon error, it is rarely founded upon truth, to the great hazard of all that is important.

144 Further another's plan, to accomplish your own. It is the strategic means to an end; even in heavenly matters, Christian fathers inculcate this holy principle. It is an important form of disguise, because it serves to stimulate useful enterprise, by strengthening the purpose of another, for it looks as though his ends were being served, and yet it is only to open the road to your own; but the business may not be entered upon by the giddy-headed, especially where the ground is dangerous; thus, with persons whose

first reaction is to say No, it is well to cover the play, in order not to emphasize the difficulty of saying Yes, especially where the trick may be apparent: this bit of advice belongs to those rules that have to do with action through indirection, all of which are most exquisitely subtile.

Do not exhibit your sore finger; for all to strike upon, and do not complain of it, for malice always pounds where the hurt is most painful. Of no service to get angry, for to get angry is only to add to the public amusement: evil intent goes sneaking around to uncover infirmities, and prods about to discover where the suffering is greatest, making the test a thousand times, until it finds the spot. Never will the circumspect reveal his feelings, nor disclose his disease, be it acquired, or inherited, for fate herself is pleased at times to scourge us, and just where it

145

hurts most. She always crucifies us in the flesh, on which account never disclose, either what mortifies, or what vivifies, the one that it may pass, the other that it may last.

146 Look beneath. For ordinarily things are far other than they seem; and the dullness which does not seek to pass beyond the rind, is due to be increasingly disillusioned, as it penetrates into the interior. The false is forever in the lead in everything, continually dragging along the fools by their tethers: the truth brings up the rear, is late, and limps along upon the arm of time, wherefore the man of insight will save for it at least the half of that faculty, which our great mother has wisely given us twice. Deceit is something very superficial, wherefore those who are superficial are taken in at once. The man of deeds lives solidly within himself, to be better

treasured of his colleagues, and of those who know.

147 Open to suggestion. None is so perfect, that he may not at times need a monitor, for he is incurably the fool who will not listen to another: even the most exempt should lend ear to friendly advice, for sovereignty itself may not shut off gentlemanly counsel: there are men who cannot be saved because they cannot be reached, who hurl themselves to destruction because none dares to approach to restrain them: the most faultless should leave open one door to friendship, for it will become a portal of succor; one friend should be given place to advise without embarrassment, and even to find fault; but such privilege should rest upon his rightness, and upon our trust in his fidelity, and his understanding: only we need not make our inner selves available to just any-

body, nor even our reputation; keep within the closet of your soul the faithful mirror of a trusted friend to whom you may turn, and from whom you will take correction when in error.

148 Have the art of conversation, for in it is shown who is the man. No human enterprise demands greater heed, because it constitutes so large a part of daily living, and hence its dangers, or its advantages; if care is necessary to write a letter, which is merely conversation that has been studied, and committed to paper; how much more in everyday speech, when the intelligence must at every moment pass examination? Men skilled, take the pulse of the soul at the tongue, in which knowledge the Sage of sages said: Speak, if you would that I know you. Some hold that the art of conversation lies in its artlessness, that it should lack formality, like the

clothing; this may hold between friends, but where it is to gain respect, it must have more form, for that displays better the substance of the man: to strike it right you must be able to adapt yourself to the mind, and to the spirit of your company; do not make yourself a carping critic of words, or you will be held the grammatical fool; nor yet the opponent of what is reasonable, or all men will flee you, and look askance at what you have to say. Discretion in what is said, is better far than eloquence.

Know how to let the blame slip upon another: to have a shield against malevolence, is wise strategy on the part of those who govern, a thing not born of weakness, as the envious think, but of greater strength, to keep someone at hand to shoulder the blame for failure, or to take on the punishment of general abuse: not everything can succeed; nor can every- 149

body be satisfied, wherefore provide yourself with someone to atone for your errors, and be a well for tears; even though it cost you your pride.

150 Know how to sell your wares. Their intrinsic worth is not enough, for all do not turn the goods or look deep; most run where the crowd is, running because the others run. It is a great art to know how to sell, at times by praising the goods, because praise excites desire, at times by giving them a good name, which is a great way to exalt them, but always cloaking any show of affectation in the matter. To say that they are intended for the sophisticated only, is to whet the public appetite, for everybody thinks himself sophisticated, and if he is not, then his sense of loss will spur on his desire: never should your business be accounted easy, or commonplace, for to

make a thing easy is more to make it common; all have an itch for the unusual because more pleasing, alike to the taste, and to the intelligence.

151 Think ahead: today for tomorrow, and even for many days beyond; the wisest of precautions, to take time for this: for to the ready there are no accidents, and to the forewarned no dangers: do not wait to think until you are overcome, but be more forehanded: anticipate with matured reflection the worst outrages of destiny. The pillow is a silent Sibyl, and to sleep upon an enterprise, avails more than to be sleepless under it: some act first and think afterwards, which means that they concern themselves more with the excuses for, than the consequences of their acts: others think neither before, nor after, when all life should be continuous thinking, in order to hit

upon the right way: it is reflection, and foresight that assure freedom to life.

152 Never accompany him who can overshadow you, either because he is better, or worse: he of the better qualifications, gains the better recognition: wherefore he will always play the main rôle, and you the secondary: and if any glory devolves upon you, it will be through his merits. The moon shines only when alone among the stars; for as the sun rises, it either fades, or goes out; never approach him who eclipses you, but only him who increases your lustre. It was by such means that the wise Fabula could look beautiful at the feast of Mars, and shine against the homeliness, and the slovenliness of her maids; neither feel compelled to endanger your own status through assumption of the wrong side, nor grant honor to an-

other at the cost of your own reputation; to be made, walk with your superiors, but if made, with the mediocre.

153 Beware of entering to fill a large gap, but if you do commit yourself, let it be in the knowledge that you overfill it. It will be necessary to be worth double your predecessor merely to equal him. Just as it is wise, to see to it that he who succeeds you is such that you are wished back; it is similarly wise, to observe that he who preceded you does not eclipse you. A hard task to fill a great hiatus, for what has gone before is always made to appear the better, wherefore to balance it does not suffice, because it holds the prior claim. It is therefore necessary to have command of additional gifts in order to dispossess the other of the higher opinion in which he is held.

154 Slow to believe, and slow to cherish. Maturity may be recognized in the slowness with which a man believes: the false is the ordinary of the day, wherefore let belief be the extraordinary. He who is too early stirred, must too late stand ashamed; but do not exhibit your doubt in the faith of another, for that passes as discourtesy, or even, insult, since such action holds your witness a cheat, or one cheated; but even this is not the greatest pitfall, but that the unbeliever is marked the liar, since lying is burdened of two faults, it neither believes, nor is it believed. Suspension of judgment is always the part of wisdom in a listener, and the remission of faith to authority the part of wisdom in a speaker. Another species of imprudence lies in too ready allegiance, for as men lie in word, they lie in deeds, and the latter is more deadly because more potent.

Art, in rising to passion. Whenever possible, let cold deliberation take the place of sudden outburst; which should not prove difficult for him who has prudence. The first step in rising to anger, is to note that you are angry, for that is to enter master of the situation, having determined the need of it, and its height, and going no further; with this considered judgment let your wrath wax, and wane. Know well how to stop, and when, for the most difficult feat in racing lies in stopping. Fine proof of judgment to keep one's head when the fools have lost theirs: every flare of temper is a step downwards from the rational; but properly saddled it will not go beyond reason, or trample upon conscience: to be master of an angry mood, it is expedient always to ride it with the tight rein of attention, and thus will you be

155

the first man wise ahorse, if, indeed, not the last.

156 Friends by choice. For they can be friends only after they have been tested with discernment, and proved of fortune, the elect, not only of desire, but of judgment; and though this be the most important action of life, least care is exercised in its prosecution; some are chosen merely because amusing, and the most by chance, and yet one is known by his intimates, for the enlightened never accord with the ignorant; to find pleasure in a man does not prove him a friend, for it may be the product more of happy moments found in his company, than confidence felt in his capacity; there are friends from the temple, and from the tavern; the latter for your delight, the former to make rich your accomplishments: few will be the friends of your own self, and

most, the friends of your success. The responsiveness of one good friend avails you more, than the kind intentions of many others, wherefore let him be the product of choice, and not of accident. The wise friend knows how to shield you from petty annoyances, but the stupid brings them upon you; and do not wish them too good fortune, if you do not wish to lose them.

Do not be deceived in men, for it is the worst, and the easiest of deceptions; far better to be cheated in the price, than in the goods, there being nothing more important than to look within: only there is a difference between knowing merchandise and knowing men; a great science to encompass the minds of men, and to discern their humors: just as important to have studied men, as to have studied books. 157

158 Know how to get the best out of your friends. There is about this its own kind of good sense; some acquaintances are agreeable in perspective, and others close up; and he who was never facile in conversation, may be in correspondence; for distance dims frailties, which are intolerable at hand; but a friend should not only bring you satisfaction, but stimulation, for his are the three qualities of the good, by others called those of God: unity, charity, and truth; for a friend is all in all; but few make good friends, and he who does not know how to choose them, makes fewer: to know how to keep, is more than to know how to make friends. Search out those, who promise to last, and though at first they may be new, be content that they can grow old. The best, without doubt, are those of much salt, even though their digestion costs you a measure of ef-

fort. None lives so alone as he who lives without friends; for friendship doubles the good, and divides the bad; it is the only weapon against misfortune, and the very balm of the spirit.

159 Know how to suffer fools. The wise are always restless, for he who grows in wisdom, grows impatient; he who knows much becomes harder to satisfy. The first precept of life, according to Epictetus: to be able to suffer; and to this may be reduced the half of all wisdom; if every type of folly must be borne, much patience will be required; at times we suffer most from those upon whom we most depend, which makes a school for self-control; for out of suffering comes holy peace, which is the joy of the world; and he who cannot gain this state of forbearance, let him take refuge within himself, if it be that he can stand even himself.

160 Mark your words, as a matter of caution when with rivals, and as a matter of decency, when with everybody else. There is always time to add a word, but none in which to take one back: speak, therefore, as in a testament, for the fewer the words, the less the litigation: make of that which is of no importance the training ground for that which is: for reserve has an aspect of divinity about it: he too easy of speech, shortly falters, and falls.

161 Know your pet weaknesses. Even the man most perfect does not escape having some, to which he is either married, or with which he consorts: they live in the spirit, and the greater this, the greater they, or the more apparent, tolerated not because their owner is ignorant of them, but because he loves them: the two evils joined, passion, and that for something poor, obscure what is most per-

fect, as offensive to the beholder, as it is sweet to the owner. Here, an opportunity for a bold conquest of self, to give joy to the rest of your talents; for all men take immediate note of your defects, and as they come to praise the great good in you which they admire, they are stopped where they observe such defects, to make them more ugly to the detriment of all your other gifts.

Know how to triumph over the envious, and the malevolent. Not enough merely to ignore them, even though most wise, but better to meet them with brave face, for there is not enough praise for him who speaks well of him who speaks ill; no vengeance more noble, than that which through worth, and ability, becomes the tormentor and the executioner of the envious: every success tightens the rope about the neck of the malevolent, and the glory of the 162

envied becomes the hell of the envious; for this is the greatest of all punishments, to draw poison from happiness: the envious dies not once, but as often as the envied is brought to life by the voice of applause, the enduring fame of the one vying with the enduring torture of the other; for the envied is as immortal in his glory, as the envious in his pain. The trumpet of fame, which calls the one to life eternal, brings public execution to the other, sentenced to be choked to death by the choke of his envy.

163 Never through sorrow for their unhappiness involve yourself in the lot of the unfortunate. What is the ill luck of the one, may well be the luck of another, for the one could never be fortunate, if many others were not unfortunate: the peculiar property of the unfortunate to gain the favor of those gentlemen, who are forever seek-

ing to make recompense through their senseless charity, for the blows of unhappy fate, and so one may at times see him who in his prosperity was hated by all, in his adversity pitied by all: the hatred for the man exalted having changed to a sympathy for the man cast down. Let the awake take note of how the cards of fortune are shuffled. There are some, who never walk except with the unfortunate, and who are cheek by jowl today with the man in his unhappiness, from whom they fled yesterday in his happiness, all of which evidences at times nobility of soul, but not intelligence.

164 Stick your finger in the air. In order to discover how a matter will be received, especially if you suspect its success, or its sanction, for thus do you gain assurance of its happy outcome, or opportunity, either to go forward, or to turn back; you test out the public

temper by this trick, and if observant learn where you stand, a good thing to know in law, in love, and in government.

165 Make a clean fight. The man of intelligence may be driven to fight, but not to fight foully; each must act for what he is, and not for what he is held: to remain the gentleman in a contest is to deserve all praise; fight to win, not only through superior strength, but through superior manner. To win basely, is not glorious, but humiliating. Always be the better in generosity; the man of honor does not avail himself of forbidden arms, and such are those of a friendship ended, for a hatred just begun, for confidence may not be turned into vengeance; because all that smells of treason, corrupts a good name. Men of honor are affronted by any atom of baseness; for the noble must be kept far from the vile. Glory in the fact

that if gallantry, generosity, and fidelity were to perish off this earth, they might still be discovered in your breast.

166 Distinguish the man of words from the man of deeds. It calls for rare judgment, as does distinction between friends, between persons, or between titles; for the difference is great; to be filled with good talk and to do badly is an evil, but a greater evil to be filled with cheap talk and to do no good: we cannot feed on words, for they are wind, nor can we live on courtliness, for that is polite sham; to hunt birds with a light, is truly to blind them. The vain may stuff themselves upon bombast, but words should be the pledge of deeds, in order to have value; the trees that bear no fruit, but only leaves, are apt to lack heart, so learn to distinguish between them, using the one for its timber, and the other for its shade.

167 Know how to help yourself. There is no better companion in the great exigencies of life, than a stout heart; and when it flags it must be given support by the organs that stand about it. Fear grows less in him who knows how to help himself. Never make surrender to fate, for then she ends by making herself intolerable. Some help themselves little to ease their burdens, in fact they double them because they do not know how to carry them. He who really knows himself, brings thought to the support of his frailties, and the man of intelligence comes out victorious from under everything, even the unlucky stars.

168 Do not fall into the class of the colossal asses. Such are all the pompous, the presumptuous, the stubborn, the capricious, the too easily led, the freaks, the affected, the facetious, the faddists, the per-

verse, the sectarians of all kinds, and the whole generation of the intemperate; monsters, all of them, of impertinence. Every monstrosity of the spirit, is more deforming than one of the body, because it degrades a superior beauty. But who can bring order out of such general confusion? When the soul has no captain, no use to look for direction; and what was to have been the gentle hint of derision, is falsely imagined to be applause.

Note that a miss counts more than an hundred strikes. None looks upon the sun in her splendor, and all in her eclipse; vulgar history makes no mention of what goes right, but only of what goes wrong; better known by far is all evil through gossip, than all good through acclaim, for many would never have been known, had they not failed; neither do all the accomplishments of a man taken to- 169

gether avail to blot out a single, and small dishonor; let every man get himself clear in this matter, that cognizance will be taken of everything he does badly, but none of what he does well, by the tongue of slander.

170 Know how, in all matters, to keep something in reserve. It is to insure your position; not all your wit must be spent nor all your energies sapped every time; even of what you know keep a rear guard, for it is to double your advantage, always to have in reserve something to call upon when danger threatens bad issue; the support may mean more, than the attack, because it calls for courage, and stamina. A man of wisdom always treads the solid ground of safety, and even in this sense that sharp paradox holds: more is the half, than the whole.

171 Do not waste favor. Great friends are for great occasions; so do not

squander a great trust upon matters trivial, for that is to be prodigal of good will; let the holy anchor always be kept against the worst storm. If the great is wasted upon the small, what will be left for afterwards? There is nothing more protective than a protector, nor anything more precious today than the good grace of another, for it makes, or unmakes the world, even to giving it spirit, or killing it. But men of wisdom, even as they are favored by nature, and by fame, are despised by fortune; wherefore it marks their better judgment to have, and to hold friends, than chattels.

Do not engage with him who has nothing to lose. It is to fight at a disadvantage, for the other enters without encumbrance, because he comes accoutred not even with shame, and having auctioned off everything, has nothing more to 172

lose, and so he may arrogate to himself every insolence; never expose to such great hazard your treasured reputation: it has cost you years to attain, and it can go to perdition over a trifle; thus you may lose in one unlucky moment what has cost much splendid sweat. It makes the man of honor pause and consider what he has at stake, for while regarding his own good name, he looks at that of the other, and so becomes entangled only after great consideration, proceeding with such caution, that prudence is given time to recall, and put in safe-keeping a reputation: for not even victory can bring in as much as was risked when a good name was merely exposed to loss.

173 Not too fragile in rubbing up against the world, or your friends. Some break with the greatest ease, showing that they are made of poor stuff; they fill themselves

with imagined wrongs, and all others with vexation; they show their natures to be more soft, than the eyes themselves, so none may touch them, either in fun, or in earnest; such trifles offend them, that real offence is not necessary. They must watch their step who have dealings with them, alert always to their great sensitiveness, and on guard against every draft, since the slightest disturbance makes them sick; such men are commonly selfish, the slaves of their desires, for which they would sacrifice everything, worshippers of their own imagined honor; but the heart of friendship is like the heart of a diamond in its endurance, and in its lastingness.

Do not live at too great pace. To 174
know how to spread out things, is to know how to enjoy them: for many life is finished before satisfaction is reached; contentment

never comes, because they do not know enjoyment; and so they would afterwards turn about, because they have so quickly come to the end; veritable postilions of life, who to the general rush of the times, add their own cheerful push. They seek to swallow in a day, what can scarce be digested in a lifetime; they live swiftly through every joy, eating up the years to come, and as they crowd forward in such haste, they are quickly through with everything; even in the search after knowledge it is well to have manner, in order not to learn those things which are better not learned; the days outnumber the joys of life; wherefore go slowly in enjoyment, but in work make haste: for the day's labors are gladly done, but not so gladly, its joys.

175 A man of substance, and he who is, has little fondness for those who are not. An unhappy con-

spicuousness that which does not rest upon a sure foundation. Not all who seem to be, are men, but humbugs, conceived of sin, to be the fathers of fraud; and many more are like unto them, in that they support them, and take more delight in the false, which promises most, because most, than in the truth, which promises little, because so little. In the end their shams fare badly, because they lack foundation in truth, and only truth can bestow a true reputation, and only solid character prove profitable; one fraud makes necessary another and more; and so the whole of what is built up is flimsy, and as it rests upon air, it is destined to return to earth. Never has slatternliness attained old age, for an outward show that promises too much, is sufficient to make itself suspect, just as that which is overly proved, is held impossible.

176 Know, or hearken to him who knows. You cannot live without knowledge, either your own, or borrowed, but there be many who do not know that they know nothing, and others who think that they know, but know nothing; such deformities of the mind are incurable, whence it is that the ignorant do not know themselves, thus failing to discover what they lack: some would be wise, if they did not believe that they were, and so it comes to pass that even though the oracles of wisdom are few, they live in idleness, because none consults them; it does not dwarf grandeur, nor argue against capacity to seek advice, yea, to seek advice brings credit: better to debate in the mind, to avoid combat with misfortune.

177 Avoid familiarities in the daily round. Neither practice them yourself, nor permit them to be practiced upon you. He who al-

lows them, forfeits at once that sovereignty, which his character bestowed, and respect to boot: the stars do not get intimate with us, but hold themselves aloof in their splendor, for the divine demands respect, and everything too human makes easy disrespect, for earthly affairs even as they become more human, become cheap; because through communion they communicate their tawdriness, which caution was careful to conceal; it is never well to get on common ground with anyone, not with your betters, because that is dangerous, and not with your inferiors, because that is indecent; but least of all with the common herd, for it is bold because it is ignorant, and failing to recognize the favor done it, presumes upon it as a right; intimacy is a form of vulgarity.

Trust to your heart, especially when it is being proved, for it is 178

never untrue to itself, often foretelling what is of greatest import; a veritable inward oracle; many have died of what they feared: but of what use to fear a thing, unless to remedy it? Some have a heart most faithful, the advantage of a superior nature, which always forewarns them, and gives alarum of danger in order that it may be met; but there is no sense in sallying forth just to invite trouble; unless such sally is made to engage the evil in order to overcome it.

179 Reserve is the mark of capacity: the breast without its hiding place, is an open letter: secrets are buried best where there is depth, for there lie caverns and bays where treasure may be hid; profundity is the product of a great mastery over self, and to be master in this, is to be a conqueror indeed; the heart must pay tribute, to all to whom it reveals itself; in inner quiet lies

the safety of wisdom itself; what threatens reserve are the attacks of others; as those of contradiction, in order to incite it; or those of baiting, in order to drive it from cover, which will only make the observant shut up more tightly. Those things which are to be done, should not be talked about, and those which have been talked about, should not be done.

Never be misled by what your foe 180
does. If a fool he will not do what a wiser thinks best, because he never knows what is best; and if a man of discretion, not then, because he wishes to cloak his intent, even to the point of forestalling the other; every situation must be looked at from two points of view and be considered first from one side, and then the other, to be disposed of from either angle; the minds of men differ greatly, wherefore let cool judgment re-

main alert, not so much because of what is happening, as because of what may.

181 Without lying, do not speak the whole truth; there is nothing that requires more careful handling than the truth, for it is a bleeding from the heart; just as necessary to know how to tell the truth, as to know how to hush it; a whole reputation for uprightness may be ruined with a single lie, for the lie is held treachery, and the liar a traitor, which is worse; not all truths may be spoken, because some matter to us, and some matter to others.

182 A bit of audacity in everything is common sense. It is to step down your concept of the others in order not to believe them so exalted, that you fear them; never allow your imagination to make surrender to your heart; some appear great, until you meet them;

but communion with them, serves more to bring disillusion to you than exaltation to them; none gets beyond the narrow confines of the human; there is in every one a But; in some, of the heart, and in some of the spirit. Rank bestows an apparent superiority; but only rarely is it accompanied by personal qualification: for fate has a way of avenging greatness of office by meanness of the occupant; the imagination always hurries forward, and paints things brighter than they are; conceding not only what is, but what might be: let calm judgment, so often disillusioned by experience, correct the picture, in order that stupidity be not too bold, nor virtue too timorous; if self-confidence has at times availed the simpleton, of how much more use might it not be to the deserving, and to the understanding?

183 Hold to nothing too violently. Every fool stands convinced; and everyone convinced is a fool; and the faultier a man's judgment, the firmer his conviction; even when the proof is on your side, it is well to make concession; for your reasons are not unknown, and concession manifests your gentlemanliness; more is risked in bitter argument, than can be gained through victory; for such is not to defend the truth, but to exhibit bad manner; there are blockheads most difficult or impossible of conversion; for when conviction is joined to obstinacy, both are indissolubly married to stupidity. Inflexibility should lie in the will, and not in the judgment. Yet there be exceptions when you may not yield without danger of being twice conquered; first in your decision, and then in its execution.

Do not stand on ceremony. For even in a king its affectation was celebrated as something ridiculous. Punctiliousness frets the spirit, and yet whole nations put on this ceremoniousness. The apparel of fools is patched of such pieces, idolaters of their self-esteem, which they show to be built on little, because constantly in fear that something may injure it; well to demand respect, but not so well to be held the grand master of pomposity: and yet it is the truth, that the man without all ceremony must needs have the greatest virtues; good form should not be affected, nor yet despised; but it does not evidence greatness to be a mere stickler about trifles. 184

Never risk your reputation on one roll of the dice for if you do not win, the loss is irreparable. It is very easy to go wrong once, and especially the first time: not always is this the right moment, 185

wherefore it is said: await your day. Assure yourself therefore of a second chance through the first, if it went wrong, or if it went right, let the first have been the pawn for the second; always hold in reserve recourse to something better, and the name of having something more: for things depend upon circumstance, and very much so, whence it comes that the happiness is so rare of the happy ending.

186 Know what is evil, no matter how worshipped it may be. Let the man of sense not mistake it, even when clothed in brocade, or at times crowned with gold, because it cannot thereby hide its hypocrisy, for slavery does not lose its infamy, however noble the master; the vices may stand high, but they are not high: some see a great man afflicted with this vice or that; but they do not see, that he is not great because of it but

only in spite of it. The example of the man high up is so convincing, that even his uglinesses prove engaging, so that flattery at times mimics them, not seeing, that if in the great such things are overlooked, in the small, they are despised.

187 All that gains approval, do yourself, and all that gains disapproval through another. By the first you invite affection, and by the second you avoid hatred. More satisfying to the great to do good, than to receive it, for it is the joy of his spirit: rarely can one give pain to another without suffering himself, either through compassion, or through commiseration: God himself does not work without reward, or retribution; dealing out the good directly, and the bad indirectly: wherefore keep at hand someone to absorb the recoils of discontent, which are hatred, and abuse:

madness in a crowd tends to be like madness in dogs, who failing to recognize the cause of their suffering, turn upon their muzzles, and even though these are not primarily at fault, make them suffer as though they were.

188 To be the bearer of good report, is proof of your good taste, for it indicates that you knew the best elsewhere, and that you may be relied upon for correct opinion of what is here: he who was able to discern the best yesterday, will know how to value rightly today: to bring to notice what is praiseworthy, is to furnish material for conversation, and for emulation. It is the polite way of paying obeisance to what is perfect about you; others always choose to be the bearers of evil report, seeking to flatter those present by a cheapening of those absent, coming off well with men so superficially minded, that they do not

recognize this trick of speaking evil of the one to the other; some make politics of the matter of cherishing more the mediocrities of today, than the great of yesterday. Let the astute see through these subtilties of the bearer, and let him not be dismayed by the exaggeration of the one, or inflated by the flattery of the other, realizing that the behavior with the one group is as with the other, changing in mind and in action according to the place and the time.

189 Know how to make use of another's want; for if it rises to the level of lust, it becomes the most effective of thumbscrews. The philosophers have declared desire to be nothing, and the politicians, everything. The latter are the wiser. They make of the desires of others the stepping stones to their own ends. They utilize the opportunity, and by emphasizing

the difficulties of satisfying such desires, sharpen the appetite. For they are assured of more through the heat of passion, than the lukewarmness of possession; for as resistance to what is wanted increases, desire grows: a very subtile way of accomplishing your own purposes, to keep men dependent upon you.

190 Find consolation in everything. For even the worthless is everlasting. There is no sorrow unmitigated, the fools finding it in their luck, which makes proverbial the luck of the hunchback. To live long, it is only necessary to be worth little; the cracked pot is the one never broken, for which reason it irritates because it lasts so long: it is against those who really count that fortune seems to hold a grudge, for she bestows length of days upon those most useless, and shortness of days upon those who are something.

The more important, the younger they die, while those of no profit live forever, at times because they seem to, at others, because they really do. To the unhappy it looks as though fortune, and death, had both conspired to forget him.

191 Do not consider an account squared by mere excess of courtesy, for it is a species of deception. In order to bewitch, some men need not the herbs of Thessaly, for they can enchant fools with one airy wave of the hat, which flatters. They make a business of overcivility, and pay their way with the breath of fine words. He who promises everything, promises nothing, and yet he who merely promises remains the snare of fools; real courtesy is an obligation, and the affectation of it, a deception, especially if inappropriate: it is not decency, but subserviency. These men do not

show respect to the person, but to his goods, and they flatter not any talents which they may recognize, but only the advantages for which they hope.

192 A man of peace, a man of years; for to live, let live; the peaceful not only live, but they reign; lend your ears, and your eyes, but keep silent; the day without strife, makes the night with its sleep: to live long, and to live in joy, is to live twice, and the fruit of peace; he has everything who gives no concern to what does not concern him; nothing more purposeless, than to see purpose in everything, for it is equally stupid to break the heart over what is not your business, as not to set the teeth into that which is.

193 Look to him who comes with another's concern, in order to accomplish his own. There is no defence against trickery like that of watch-

fulness; against a code, a good decoder: some make of other men's affairs, their own, and unless the key to their intent is discovered your every move will only get you deeper into the job of withdrawing from the fire the chestnuts of another, to the great damage of your own hand.

194 A proper conceit of yourself, and of your affairs, especially at the start of life. All have a high opinion of themselves, and particularly those with least reason; each dreams himself a fortune, and imagines himself a prodigy: hope wildly promises everything, and then time fulfills nothing: such things bring about a torment of the spirit, when illusion becomes reality, wherefore let the man of judgment correct such blunders, and even though he hopes for the best, let him always expect the worst, in order to be able to accept with equanimity whatever comes.

It is well, of course, to aim somewhat high, in order to hit the mark; but not so high that you fail entirely to start your life's job; to get this proper conceit of yourself is absolutely necessary, for without experience it is very easy to confuse the conjectured with the fact, and there is no greater panacea against all that is foolish, than understanding; wherefore let every man know what is the sphere of his abilities, and his place, and thus be able to make the picture of himself coincide with the actual.

195 Know appreciation. There is none, who cannot be the master of another in something; or having himself excelled, cannot be excelled: to know how to pick the fruit from every man's tree is profitable knowledge; the wise man understands what things are worth because he recognizes the good in everything, and knows

how much it takes to make things good. Only a fool is scornful of everything, through ignorance of what is good, and through bad choice of what is no good.

Know your star. None is so forgotten that he has none, and if yours be an unlucky one, it is because you mistake it. Some stand in the high favor of princes, and of potentates, knowing not why, or wherefore, but that their luck showed them favor; to help it along they needed only industry; others discover themselves in the graces of the wise, and similarly some are better received of one nation than another, or made more welcome in this city, than in that; thus also is more satisfaction to be gained in one position, or place, than in another, even though in what they offer they appear to be alike or are actually identical: fate shuffles the cards as and when she chooses; let each

196

know his own star, as he knows his mind, for it determines whether he perish, or be saved; let him know how to follow it, and keep pace with it, never mistaking it, for that would be to miss the polar star itself, to which the nearby Little Bear is constantly pointing.

197 Do not saddle yourself with fools: he who does not know them is one, and a greater, he who knowing them, does not shake them off, for they are dangerous in the daily round, and deadly as confidants, even if at times their own fears restrain them; or the watchful eye of another; in the end they commit some foolishness, or speak it, which if they tarry over it, is made worse: a poor crutch to aid another's reputation, he who has none himself; these men are as full of unhappiness as they are full of folly, for the one is the payee, or the payer of the other;

but one point about them is not so bad, which is, that even though the wise are of no service to them, they are of much service to the wise, either as example, or as warning.

198 Be known as transplantable. There are exotics, which in order to flower, need change of soil, and especially those most rare. The home country is a stepmother to its own great talent: jealousy rules her, as the land itself, and she remembers better the weakness in which a man started, than the strength to which he has grown: a needle can gain distinction if passed from one country into another, and glass can make diamonds look cheap when carried elsewhere; all that is foreign is cherished, at times because it comes from afar, at times because it arrives complete; and in its perfection: there be men who were once the despised of their circle,

who today are the honored of the world, respected by their compatriots, and those foreign; by the one, because they are seen from a distance, and by the other because they come from a distance; never will he pay homage to the idol upon the altar, who knew it as a stump in the forest.

199 Know how to make a place for yourself through merit, and not through push. The right road to distinction, is that of merit, and when industry is joined to worth, it is a short cut to the stars; but mere goodness is not enough, and push is unbecoming, for then things arrive so soiled, that they produce loathing; best is the middle course between merit, and knowledge of how to usher yourself in.

200 Leave something to be desired, in order not through happiness to become unhappy, for the body

should want air, and the spirit have its longings: when all is yours, all turns to ashes, and disappoints, for even the mind must be left with a passion to know, to pique its curiosity and to keep hope alive: the surfeit of happiness is mortal; in bestowing reward it is wisdom never to gratify: when nothing more is to be desired, everything is to be feared, the most unfortunate of fortunes, for where desire ends, apprehension begins.

Fools all who seem it, and the half of those who do not. Folly fills the world, and if there be any wisdom left in it, this is folly compared to that of heaven; but the greatest fool is he who does not know himself one, and declares all others such. For to be wise, it is not enough to seem it, least of all to yourself: he knows, who knows that he does not know; and he does not see, who does not see 201

that the others see: with the whole world full of fools, there is none who thinks himself one, or even suspects it.

202 Words, and deeds make the consummate man. To speak the estimable, and to do the honorable, the first as evidence of a good head, and the second of a good heart, for together they are the children of a great soul; words are the ghosts of deeds; the former are the ewes, the latter the rams; of greater moment to be cheered, than to be the cheer leader: to say something is easy, but to do something difficult. Achievement is the substance of life itself, and praise, its decoration; greatness in action endures, greatness in words, passes, for deeds are the fruits of the mind, which if it be wise, makes the former triumphant.

203 Recognize the great of your period. They will not be many;

one Phoenix in all the world, one great captain, one perfect orator, one sage in the whole of a century, one illustrious king from the many; it is the mediocrities that outdo them, alike in number and in kind, for the great are few, because they demand perfection; and the higher their class, the greater the difficulty of attaining the highest seat; many have seized for themselves the surname of great, from Caesar, or Alexander, but in vain, for without deeds, the voice is not more, than a bit of air; few Senecas have had their habitation among us, and fame celebrates but one Apelles.

Approach the easy as though it were difficult, and the difficult, as though it were easy; the first, lest overconfidence make you careless, and the second, lest faint-heartedness make you afraid; in order to do nothing, it needs but to be thought done; diligence, on the 204

other hand, accomplishes the impossible; but the greatest undertakings should not be overly pondered, that contemplation of difficulties too clearly foreseen not appal you.

205 Know the value of disdain. A trick for the attainment of an end, to be contemptuous of it; the quarry which cannot be captured while pursued, commonly falls into our hands if we but stop: as all things temporal are but the ghosts of the heavenly, they become ghostly in this also, they flee from the pursuer, and they pursue him who flees from them. Disdain is, moreover, the most politic form of vengeance; a rare maxim of the wise never to defend yourself with the pen, for it leaves a mark, that serves more to glorify the adversary, than to check his impudence; a trick of the worthless, to appear the adversaries of great men, in order indirectly to

make themselves as celebrated, as directly they merit nothing. For many would never have been heard of, had their excellent opponents not paid heed to them. There is no revenge like unto that of forgetting, for it is to bury them in the dust of their own nothingness. These impudent try to immortalize themselves, by setting fire to the wonders of the world, and the centuries; the way to silence slander is to ignore it; to fight against it, is to prejudice your own case; for though believed you still stand discredited, and the satisfaction goes to your adversary; for the mere shadow of a blemish can tarnish, even when it cannot obscure the whole of a great name.

It happens that the vulgar is everywhere. Even in Corinth itself. Even in the best of families. Within the gates of his own house each may discover it himself; but 206

as there is a vulgarity, there is a countervulgarity, which is worse; this special variety has all the properties of the familiar, as the fragments of a mirror have those of the unbroken, but, more damaging; it talks like a fool, and impertinently finds fault; it is the great disciple of ignorance, the godfather of idiocy, and the ally of false report, for which reason no attention need be paid to what it says, and less to what it thinks, but it is important to know it, in order to get free of it, whether in man, or in object: for whatever smacks of folly is vulgar, and the vulgar are all fools.

207 Use self-restraint. Especially well to have considered the chance when a mischance. There are heats of passion in which the reason slides, wherein lies the danger of going to perdition. One second of rage, or one of stupid self-satisfaction, brings more in its

train than many hours of listlessness. It occasions in a moment, what to correct afterwards requires a lifetime. The craftiness of another may thus try to tempt your spirit, to discover where you stand, or what you think: using it like a thumbscrew upon your inner self, to drive mad the best of minds. Match your self-restraint against such wiliness, particularly if unlooked-for; great control is necessary if passion is not to break the bit, for a great head has he who has such ahorse; he goes with caution who knows the danger; light as seems a word to him who tosses it off, even so heavy may it seem to him who receives it, and weighs it.

Do not die of the fool's sickness. 208
The wise customarily die of mental hunger; and the fools, of the mental glut of too much counsel. To die like a fool, is to die crushed of heavy thinking; some die be-

cause they have sense, and others live because they have none; thus both are fools, the latter because they do not die of grief, and the former because they do. A fool is one who dies of too much brain: from which it comes that some die of reason and others live for no reason; but with many dying of being fools, few fools die.

209 To keep free of the popular inanities, marks especially good sense. They are highly esteemed because so prevalent; and many a man who could not be trapped by some particular stupidity, was unable to escape the general; one such superstition is that none is content in his fortune, even though the best, or that none is discontented with his mind, even though the worst. Another, that all are covetous and look with unhappiness upon what is their own, and with joy upon what is another's. Again, that they of today glorify only the

things of yesterday, and those from here only the things from afar. Or that all that is past is better, and everything that is distant, more valuable. As great a fool he who celebrates everything, as he who deprecates everything.

Know how to deal out the truth. She is dangerous, and yet the upright man cannot escape speaking her: here is where art is required; the skilled physicians of the soul have devised a method of sweetening her, for when she is about to act upon error, she is the quintessence of bitterness. Avail yourself here of the expertness of good form, for the selfsame truth that wheedles one, cudgels another; be able to speak of things present in the terms of things past. With him who can understand, a hint is sufficient; but where nothing is sufficient, there go dumb. Princes may not be cured with remedies bitter, wherefore it becomes an art to

210

know how to gild the naked truth.

211 In heaven all is gladness. In hell all is sorrow. Upon this earth, since it lies between, sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. We have our being between the two extremes, and so it partakes of both. Fortune should vary, not all being felicity, nor all adversity. This world is a zero, and by itself without value, but joined to heaven, great: indifference to your lot is common sense, and not to be surprised by it, wisdom. Our life becomes more complicated as we go along, like a comedy, but at its end it becomes simpler; keep in mind, therefore, the happy ending.

212 Keep the ultimate refinements of your art to yourself. This is a rule of those masters who themselves best employ the subtilties of their art even as they teach them, for they must always remain the superiors, and thereby the masters:

there has to be art in the teaching of art, that the spring of learning may never go dry, even as the spring of giving; only thus can your own reputation be maintained, and the dependence of others upon you. In the business of giving joy, and of teaching, this is a great rule to observe, to proceed always by feeding their wonder, and by anticipating within yourself their ideal: to have a reserve of everything is the great way to life, to conquest, and especially in those employments most exalted.

Know how to argue. It is the great trick of probing, not in order to entangle yourself, but to entangle another. The most effective of thumbscrews is that which makes the feelings flinch, and the true emetic of the secrets of a heart is a lukewarmness in believing them; this key to the tightest locked of breasts, makes possible 213

a most sensitive testing, both of the will, and of the judgment; and a deprecatory comment upon the idle word let fall by another, ferrets out the most hidden secrets, drives them into the mouth to be chewed over, until they fall from the tongue, to be caught in the snare of your artifice; reserve on your part, makes the other throw it to the winds, whereby his feelings are exposed, even though by any other method his heart would have been closed. The affectation of doubt, is the nimblest lockpick that curiosity can employ, in order to discover whatever may interest it, but it is best even for education, when it is a good trick on the part of the pupil to bait his teacher, who thereby excites himself to greater effort in the declaration, and the foundation of his beliefs; whence it comes that the well-moderated debate makes for the most effective teaching.

Having committed one blunder, do not make it two. All too commonly in order to repair one, four others are committed; or excuse is made for one folly with a second and a greater; folly is either of the house of lies, or lies are of the house of folly, for in order to stand, each needs the support of many; worse than the defence of evil, has always been its protection, and more evil than the evil itself, the inability to hide it; the bequest of one vice, is the bestowal of many others at interest: the wisest of men may slip once, but not twice, and that only inadvertently, and not by design. 214

Watch him who works by indirection. A trick of the agent to put the will off guard that he may steal upon it, for he who is outwitted is outdone; such men conceal their intent only to attain it, and put it in the background in order that when they act it will 215

be in the foreground, a shot that reaches its mark through its very carelessness. But the attention should not be asleep, when the intent is awake, and when this leaves the stage in order to deceive, let the other take it in order to undeceive; let caution note the craftiness with which the man approaches, and recognize the pretexts advanced to arrive at his purpose: one thing is proposed, and another is pretended, and both are then skillfully turned about to hit the very bull's-eye of his intent; know therefore what you are conceding him, and at such times allow him to understand, that you understand.

216 Be able to express yourself, not only clearly, but with charm. Some conceive easily, and have a hard delivery; but without clarity these children of the spirit, our thoughts and our judgments, are not really brought into life; others

have the capacity of such vessels, as hold much, but give forth little: on the other hand, some may pour forth more than was foreseen; what resolution is to the will, exposition is to the mind, and both are great attributes; clear heads are much praised, but those confused are venerated because not understood; wherefore at times be not too clear, in order not to seem too ordinary; but how can a world get a concept of what it hears, if the speaker himself has no clear notion of what he is talking about?

Neither love, nor hate without end. Confide in the friends of today, as though the enemies of tomorrow, and the worst; and because such things come to pass, be prepared; do not provide the deserters of friendship with arms, with which to make a better war; toward your enemies on the other hand, keep open a door of recon- 217

ciliation, and let it be a generous one, for this is the safest: the thirst for vengeance of long ago becomes the torture of another day, and the joy over the evil done, gives way to sadness.

218 Never act through obstinacy, but only through reason. Every obstinacy is an abscess, the fat daughter of passion, she who has never yet done anything right: there are those who reduce everything to war, veritable highwaymen of friendly intercourse; they seek that all they push through be made a victory: and they do not know peaceful pursuit. For command, or for rule, such men are pernicious, for they make party strife of authority, and enemies of those who should be their children: they would arrange for their ends by intrigue, and attain them as the fruit of their craftiness; but when the great mass has dragged their duplicity into the

open, it rises against them; it breaks down their plans and so they accomplish nothing; they go away o'erladen with trouble, and everyone adds to their burden. These men have crooked minds, and often accurséd hearts: the way to treat these mountebanks, is to flee from them even to the Antipodes, for its barbarism is more tolerable, than their uncouthness.

219 Do not be held a cheat, even though it is impossible to live today without cheating. Better prudent, than crafty: to be smooth in your way is to please everybody, but not everybody of your own house. Do not let sincerity degenerate into simple-mindedness, nor intelligence into trickery. Better be honored for your wisdom, than feared for your foxiness; even though the simple of heart are loved, but cheated. Let your greatest cunning lie in cover-

ing up what is held to be cunning. In the golden age it was simplicity that flourished; in this, the iron age, it is duplicity. To have the name of a man who knows what must be done, is honorable, and inspires trust, but to have that of being a sham, is disreputable, and engenders mistrust.

220 When unable to wear the lion's skin, clothe yourself in the fox's. To know how to yield to the times, is to stand above them: he who accomplishes his purpose, never endangers his reputation; where force fails, try art; over one road, or another, either the royal one of courage, or the bypath of cunning: more things have been gained by knack, than by knock, and the wise have been victorious many more times than the valorous, and not the other way about; when not possible to attain your end, register your contempt of it.

Do not be the cause of embarrassment to yourself, or others. There be men who offend the decencies, as much their own, as those of others, and always foolishly; they are met with easily, and parted from with difficulty; no day complete for them without its hundred annoyances; they have a humor for nothing, and so they gainsay everybody, and everything: they put on their understanding wrong side to, and so condemn everything. But the greatest traducers of the mind are those, who unable to do anything well themselves, call the efforts of others worthless. And this explains why there are so many beasts in the wide pastures of folly. 221

A man self-controlled, an evidence of prudence. The tongue is a beast, which once at large, is hard to recapture and to chain: it is the pulse of the spirit, from which the understanding deduces its state; 222

here a man observant feels the beat of the heart: a sad fact that he who should be most restrained, is often least so; a wiser man keeps free of the resultant vexations and the entanglements, by showing how much he is the master of himself. He goes carefully, a Janus in judgment, an Argus in discernment. Better if Momus had insisted that eyes be put in the hands, instead of that little window in the breast.

223 Not too individual, either through affectation, or carelessness: some become individualized, by the craziness of their actions, but these had better be regarded as flaws, than as distinctions; just as some are singled out through the ugliness of their mien, these become known by some excess in their deportment. But such things do not serve to make an individual, but only to mark him, and in very special fashion, for they

merely move men, at times to laughter, and at times to tears.

224 Know how to take things, never against the grain, even though they come that way. Everything has its cutting, and its blunt edge; the best and most useful of tools, if seized by the blade, wounds; while, on the contrary, the most destructive, if grasped by the hilt, protects: much that has given pain, if it had been taken rightly, would have given pleasure; for there is pleasure, or pain in everything, and wisdom lies in hitting upon the profitable; for one and the same thing has very different faces, as seen in different lights; look upon it in its happiest light; and do not get the reins mixed, as to what is good and what is bad: from this it comes that some discover satisfaction in everything, and others only grief: the great defence against the reverses of for-

tune, and a master rule of life, at all times, and in all circumstances.

225 Know your chief weakness. No one lives without some counterweight even to his greatest gift, which when petted, assumes tyranny; start war upon it, by calling out caution, and let your first move be a manifesto against it, for as soon as recognized, it is conquered, especially if the victim sees as clearly, as the onlookers; to be master of yourself, you must rise above yourself; bring this chief of your defects into subjection, and you finish off all the rest.

226 Be obliging. Most men neither speak nor act for what they are, but as they must; to persuade one of evil anything will do, because evil is easily believed, however unbelievable; the most and the best of what is ours depends upon the opinion of others: some rest

content because right is on their side; but this is not enough, for it needs the help of diligence. To be obliging often costs but little; and it is worth much, for with mere words, you buy deeds; and there is no bauble so mean in this great house of the world, that once in the year it may not prove necessary, and however little its value, be missed if absent; every man speaks of an object, as he is inclined.

Not the victim of the first impression. Some men marry themselves to the first report, whence it follows that all others can only become concubines, and since the lie always pushes itself out in front, no room is left subsequently for the truth; but neither our wish for the first seen, nor our sympathy for the first heard, should thus be able to glut us, for that marks a lack of capacity; some men are like new casks 227

which forever retain the smell of the first liquor poured into them, be it bad, or good. When this shortsightedness comes to be known, it is fatal, for it makes room for malicious gossip, allowing those of evil intent to tinge the credulous with their color, wherefore leave room always for a second impression; Alexander ever kept the other ear for the other side: save room for the second, and even the third report, for it argues small capacity to be too readily impressed, and borders on the too passionate.

228 Do not be a scandal sheet. Much less, be esteemed one, for it is to have the reputation of being a reputation killer; do not be smart at the expense of another, which is more odious, than difficult; all take vengeance upon such an one, by speaking ill of him, and since he stands alone, and they are many, he is conquered more

quickly, than they are convinced; evil should never be our pleasure, and therefore not our theme: the slanderer is forever despised, and even when, at times, great men are seen in his company, it is more because his mockery amuses them, than because his wisdom enchants them; and he who speaks evil will always have to hear still greater.

229 Know how to arrange your life, with discretion, and not as accident may determine, but with foresight, and choice. It is a toilsome affair without recreation, like a long journey without inns; variety in mental equipment makes it happier. Spend the first period of beautiful life, in conversation with the dead; we are born to know the world, and to know ourselves, and the great books of truth make us men. Let the second be spent with the living, to see, and to note all the good that

is upon this earth, for not everything is found in one country; the omnipresent Father has divided His blessings and has, at times, adorned the ugliest in the richest raiment. Let the third be wholly your own, for to think is the ultimate good fortune of man.

230 Open your eyes betimes: not all who see, see with open eyes, and not all who look, see. To see too late, brings not help, but grief; some start seeing when there is no longer anything to see, having dispossessed themselves of their house and substance before they ever possessed them. A difficult matter, to put understanding into him who has no will, and more difficult to put will into him who has no understanding; those who comprehend play around such men as if they were blind, to everybody's amusement, and because they are deaf of ear, they do not open their eyes to see; but

there is no lack of men to encourage this blindness, for they live because the others do not; an unhappy nag, whose master has no eyes: she will run badly to fat.

231 Never exhibit your things half-finished, for they are to be enjoyed when complete. All beginnings are without form, and the image of this shapelessness tarries in the imagination; the memory of the thing seen imperfect lingers into the completed, forbidding the enjoyment of the magnificent in one gaze, and even though this blurs the judgment of details, only so is the taste satisfied; before an object is everything, it is nothing, and in beginning to be, it is still very close to being nothing: the sight of preparation of even the daintiest morsel excites more to disgust, than to appetite; wherefore, let every great master look to it that his work be not seen in embryo, learning from

nature herself not to bring it forth, until it is ready to be seen.

232 Have just a touch of the commercial in you. Do not merely shop, but trade a little. Most philosophers are easy to cheat, for even though they know the unusual, they are ignorant of the usual of life, which is much more necessary; the contemplation of affairs sublime leaves them no time for thought of affairs mundane; and as they do not know the first thing about that which they ought to know, and about which all others can split hairs, they are either marveled at, or considered fools by the ignorant of the common herd; wherefore, let the man of wisdom see to it that he has a little of the commercial in him, just enough to keep him from being cheated, or even, from being laughed at; let him be a man fitted to the daily round, for even if this is not the highest thing in

life, it is the most necessary: of what use is knowledge unless it be made to function? And to know how to live is today the truest of sciences.

Do not fail to catch the other's mood; lest you give him pain instead of pleasure. With that by which some would oblige, they molest, because they do not grasp the spirit; ways that flatter one, offend another, and what was intended as a compliment, becomes an affront: it has often cost more to make a man unhappy, than it would have cost to make him happy: and so his gratitude and his thanks are lost, because the guiding star to his pleasure was lost, for when you do not sense another's mood, it is hard to bring him satisfaction: whence it comes that many in trying to voice an eulogy, have pronounced a curse, and thus brought upon themselves a well-merited punishment; 233

others think to entertain by their eloquence, and they only bruise the spirit with their loquacity.

234 Never trust your honor to another without the pawn to his. Proceed so that the advantage of silence or the danger of breaking it, is mutual. In matters of honor the interests of the whole company must always be at stake; whence it comes that the name of one is guarded by each of the rest. Never trust your honor to another; but if you should, at some time, let it be with all that art, which is demanded when intelligence makes concession to caution. Let the risk be mutual, and the need reciprocal, so that he does not convert himself into a witness against you, who knows himself an accomplice.

235 Know how to beg. Nothing more difficult for some, and nothing easier for others. There are those

who do not know how to refuse and with such it is not necessary to be a burglar. Then there are others to whom the No is always the first word and at any hour; with these art is necessary, and with everybody, the right moment: catch them in a happy mood, when recently refreshed in body, or spirit: and when the attention of the patron has not already been awakened and has not foreseen the trick of the supplicant: the days of joy are the days in which favors are conferred, for they flow from the inside upon the outside. Do not approach, when another has just been turned away, for at that moment all fear of saying No is gone. And after affliction is not a good time: previously to have placed the other under obligation to you, is to make the transaction merely a trade, provided, of course, that you are not dealing with a villain.

236 First make an obligation, of what you are paid for afterwards; it is a trick of the political giants, to yield favor before it is earned, for it betokens that the men concerned are men of honor. The favor thus advanced, has double merit, for in the readiness with which it is granted, it lays greater obligation upon him who receives it, and if later it is mere pay, given early it constitutes an indebtedness. This is a subtile way of evening obligations, for what the one must do to discharge his debt, the other has to do to discharge his duty. But this is true only between men with a sense of gratitude, for to mean-minded men, such advance payment of a pledge of honor acts more as a rein, than a spur.

237 Be ignorant of the secrets of those above you: you think to share the fruit, and you share the stones:

wherefore many confidants die of want: and they are like bread sops, and run the risk of these in being eaten afterwards: the confidence of a prince is not a gift, but a tax. Many have broken the mirror, that reminded them of their ugliness, and so we do not truly wish to see him who has seen us truly; nor will we welcome him, to whom we are unwelcome. Do not hold a whip hand too heavily over anyone, and least over the man of power; letting this be for benefits bestowed, rather than for favors received, for the confidences of friendship are dangerous above all other things on earth. He who tells his secrets to another, makes himself his slave, and this is a strain upon those who rule that cannot last: they will wish to regain the freedom which they have lost, and to attain it they will trample upon everything, even justice; secrets, there-

fore, should never be heard, and never spoken.

238 Know the chink in your armor. Many would count as great persons, were it not that they lack something, without which they can never attain the heights of being; it is obvious in some, that they might be much, if they could repair something little; thus certain men lack earnestness, which blurs their great gifts, and others lack friendliness of disposition, a fault which those about them note all too quickly, and especially in men of position; in some there is wanting execution, and in others, temper: all such frailties, if they were given heed, could easily be disguised, for a little care is able to impose upon the established manner a second nature.

239 Not too smart, for it is more important to be wise; to display too much edge is to go dull, for

what is too sharp commonly breaks: more secure is the ordained truth; well to have fine brains, but not a babbling tongue; for too much discourse, borders on dispute; best is a good level judgment, that does not meander about more than may be necessary.

Know how to pretend ignorance. 240
The wisest of men may at times engage in this trick, for there are many occasions, when the better wisdom consists in showing that you have none; do not be ignorant, but deport yourself as though ignorant; of little importance to be intelligent with the ignoramuses, or to have a mind among the witless; wherefore be able to speak to every man in his own language; he is not the fool who affects foolishness, but he who is affected with it; he is the simpleton, who cannot double in the part, for to this extremity has

falsity driven us; to be welcomed, the only way is to clothe yourself in the skin of that most simple of the brutes.

241 Jokes! Know how to take them, but do not play them: the first is a species of gallantry, the second a way into difficulty; he who grows ill-humored at the fiesta, has much of a beast in him, and shows himself a greater; a good joke enlivens, and to know how to take it shows good head: let him who is piqued show no irritation toward him who piqued him, better yet, to take no notice, and safest of all, not to react: for what is most serious has always sprung from what was most silly; so there is nothing that demands greater caution, and artfulness; before you begin, know exactly to what point of sufferance the soul of your subject may be driven.

Pursue your advantage. Some spend all in getting started, and so achieve nothing: they discover, but they do not prosecute; the mark of a vacillating spirit, never to gain distinction, because nothing is followed through, but everything is left to itself, even when well conceived; in others it is the mark of impatience of the spirit, a failing of the Spaniards, just as patience is the virtue of the Belgians, for these finish things, and the others get finished by them; they sweat to conquer a difficulty, only to rest content in their efforts; and do not know how to bring victory home, proving that they are capable, but that they do not ask more; but this is always evidence of lack of capacity, or prudence; if the undertaking was good, why was it not finished? or if bad, why was it begun? let sagacity retrieve its prey, and not

242

be content only to drive it from cover.

243 Not always the dove, but let the subtilty of the snake alternate with the simplicity of the dove. There is nothing more easy, than to cheat an honest man. He believes much who never lies, and he trusts much who never cheats. To be cheated is not always the outgrowth of stupidity, but at times of goodness: two kinds of men know well how to escape hurt, the experienced, at their great cost; and the crafty, at the great cost of others. Let intelligence show itself as able to disentangle, as craftiness is able to ensnare, and let no one seek to be a man so honest, that he give opportunity to the other to be dishonest; let him be a cross of the dove, with the snake, not a monster, but a marvel.

244 Know how to engender obligation. Some can make a favor re-

ceived look like a favor conceded, and it appears, or they make it appear, that they have made payment when they have received it: there are men so ingenious, that in seeking honor, they turn their own advantage into an honor granted; by such trick they twist things around, so that it looks as though the other had been done a service when actually he gave it, managing with extravagant politeness to reverse the order of the obligation, for they at least make it doubtful who gained the profit from whom, having bought for the price of praise the better bargain; also through their exhibition of pleasure in something, they create a sense of thankfulness, and satisfaction: they invoke courtesy to make an indebtedness out of what was their pleasure; by this trick they change a passive obligation into the active, thus proving themselves better politicians,

than grammarians; a great game this, but a greater that of understanding it, reversing the nonsense, by restoring to each the honor due him, and by recovering for everyone what is rightfully his.

245 Discourse always about the uncommon, and forego the common, for it marks the superior head; do not hold in too high opinion the man who never opposes you, for that is not a token of love for you, but of love for himself: do not allow yourself to be deceived through flattery, or be pleased by it, but cast it from you; always hold it to your credit that some men speak against you, especially if it be those who speak ill of all that is best; let that man pity himself whose ways please everybody, for it is a sign that he is worthless, for the perfect is of the few.

Never make explanation unless asked, and even when asked, it is a species of crime, if overdone: to excuse yourself before occasion demands, is to accuse yourself; and to allow yourself to be bled in health, is to make eyes at disease, and at malice; to explain in advance is to awaken slumbering doubt; a man of sense will never show notice of another's suspicion, for that is to go hunting for trouble; that is the time to give it the lie through the uprightness of your whole way of life. 246

Enjoy a little more, and strive a little less: others argue to the contrary; but happy leisure is worth more than drive, for nothing belongs to us, except time, wherein even he dwells who has no habitation: equally infelicitous to squander precious existence in stupid drudgery, as in an excess of noble business. Be not crushed by success, in order not to be crushed 247

under envy: it is to trample upon life, and to suffocate the spirit; some would extend this to knowledge, but he who is without knowledge, is without life.

248 Do not let the latest always carry you away. Some men forever hear the final news, which makes them go to ridiculous extremes, for they are as soft and as impressionable as wax, and therefore always carry the seal of the last signet, which has stamped out all the preceding: such men never stay put, because so variable, every man tinting them with his own color; they are bad as confidants, children all their lives, and like them ever changing in spirit, and feelings, perpetually in a state of flux, and, always lame in will and in judgment, they incline first to the one side, and then to the other.

249 Do not start life wherewith it should be ended. Some take to

rest at its beginning, and leave the toil for the finish; but the essential should be first, and then, if space is left, the accessories: others seek to triumph before they have battled, and some begin by learning the inconsequential, to postpone those studies which could bring them fame, and success, until the evening of life: another has not yet made a fair start toward fortune, when he goes giddy; the method is all-important, in order to learn, and to be able to live.

When must the opposite be inferred? Whenever we are addressed by malice; with some everything that is said must be believed in the opposite, for their Yes means No, and their No means Yes; when they decry anything, they have a high regard for it, for he who would gain something for himself, will cheapen it before others. Not all praise is 250

the fruit of good judgment, for some in order not to praise the good, praise the evil, while to him to whom nothing is bad, nothing will be good, either.

251 Employ human means, as though there were no divine, and divine means, as though there were no human; these are the rules of the Great Master, and to them no comment need be added.

252 Neither wholly yours, nor wholly another's: for each is a vulgar tyranny. From seeking to be all for himself, it follows that a man must shortly seek the whole world for himself; men of this stripe do not know how to concede the smallest point, or how to sacrifice an atom of their profit: they feel little obligation, trust to luck, and commonly this support fails them: well at times to belong to others, that the others may belong to you; and he who holds a public office, must be a public slave, else

let him renounce his crown with his cargo, as said the old lady to Hadrian. On the other hand, there are those who belong too completely to others, for stupidity always goes to extremes, and in this instance most unhappily, for not a day, not even an hour remains their own, bound so entirely to others, that one such has been called the man for everybody: this holds even unto their attitude, for they think for everybody, and never for themselves; let the attentive individual understand that none is looking out for him, but has selfish interest only in him, or through him.

Somewhat vague. For most men have low regard for what they understand, and venerate what is beyond them: the things that they treasure must have cost them something, wherefore they honor what they cannot grasp: always appear a little wiser, and smarter, 253

than may be demanded by him with whom you deal, to command his respect, but properly, and not excessively; even though it be true that with men of comprehension, wisdom counts for everything: for the majority some kind of oratory is still necessary, in order not to give them time for criticism, by keeping them busy with the mere business of interpretation: many praise, but if asked can give no reason: Why? because they revere all that is hidden since mysterious, and they sing its praises, because they hear its praises sung.

254 Do not scorn an evil because it is small, for one never comes alone, but in battalions, as do the joys; good fortune, and bad, ordinarily gather where they are already thick, and it is the rule that all men flee the unfortunate, and tie themselves to the fortunate, for even the doves, with all their sim-

plicity bow in homage to their most white. Everything fails the unlucky, himself, his reason, and his guiding star. Never awaken misfortune, when she sleeps; a slip is little, but to have this followed by a fall is fatal, for you do not know how far that will carry you; just as nothing that is good seems ever to come to fulfillment, so nothing that is bad seems ever to come to end. Against that which is sent us from heaven, patience, against that which springs from this earth, intelligence.

Know how to do good, a little at a time, but often: never allow the obligation to exceed what can be met; for he who gives too much, no longer gives, but sells. Neither must the well of gratefulness be drained, for when it is seen that satisfaction is impossible, a friendship is done. Nothing more is necessary to lose most friends, 255

than to place them in too heavy debt, for in order not to pay, they take themselves off, and from vassals turn into enemies. The idol does not care to be faced by the sculptor, who made it, nor the debtor, have his benefactor before his eyes. Smart in giving, to bestow what costs little, but is wanted much, that it be cherished more.

256 Go prepared, always, against the discourteous, the stubborn, the presumptuous, and every species of fool. You encounter many, and intelligence lies in encountering none of them. Arm yourself daily with resolutions on this point, before the mirror of your watchfulness, and thus be provided against foolish accident; go ready for the unexpected, never exposing your reputation to mere contingency: the man forearmed by intelligence, will not be attacked by effrontery. The way is difficult

through this human sea, for it is filled with rocks upon which standing founders. To sail around them is safest, if counsel in seamanship be taken from Ulysses. Of great value in all these matters is a feigned blindness; cover everything with the cloak of courtesy, for that is a quiet way out of all embarrassments.

257 Never arrive at open rupture, for that is to come off with a wounded reputation. Every man counts as an enemy, but not every man as a friend. Very few can do us any good, but nearly all, harm. The eagle no longer dwells securely in the very lap of Jupiter, from the day he has broken with a beetle. Hypocrites with open claw stir up the fire against you which has been smoldering in the hope of this opportunity: and from friends now spoiled, there emerge the worst of enemies. Each charges the other with faults that are his

own, and of those who look on, each speaks as he feels, and feels as he wishes to feel: but all pronounce you guilty, either in the beginning, for lack of prudence or, in the end, for lack of patience, and at all times for lack of intelligence; when a parting of the ways is inevitable, make it excusable: and let it be rather a growing coolness between friends, than a mounting fury between enemies; here fits that proverb about the well-ordered retreat.

258 Discover someone to help you shoulder your misfortunes. Then you will never be alone, and even in the hour of danger, not freighted with all the contumely; some think to carry off all the applause, and end by carrying off all the hisses: in such circumstance have a confidant at hand to make excuse for you, or to aid you in bearing the evil: neither fate, nor the crowd, so readily attacks two,

which explains why the intelligent physician, having missed the cure, does not miss calling another, who under the name of consultant, helps him support the coffin; divide with another your burdens, and your sorrows, for misfortune is doubly unbearable, to him who stands alone.

Take step against insult, and make of it, courtesy, for it is far cleverer to avoid insult, than to avenge it. It is a great trick to turn into a friend, him who wished to be a rival: and to turn into a protector of your honor, him who threatened its injury; it helps to know how to engender obligation; thus time for insult is taken from him, who must fill it with thanksgiving, and it is to know how to live to be able to convert into pleasure, what was to have been pain: transform into trust, malevolence itself. 259

260 Neither be, nor give all to anyone: not blood, nor friendship, nor the most pressing obligation, justifies it, for there is a big difference between the bestowal of your affection and the bestowal of yourself: the closest of ties must still admit of exceptions, and not on this account give offence to the laws of intimacy, for something should always be kept hidden even from a friend, and something concealed even from a father by his son: certain secrets are sealed from the one and imparted to another, and vice versa, and so it may be said that everything is revealed, or that everything is concealed, depending upon whom one is with.

261 Do not persist in folly. Some make a duty of failure, and having started down the wrong road, think it a badge of character to keep on; they acknowledge their error before the bar of their inner selves but before the bar of the

outside they make excuses for it, to the end that if at the start of their folly they were marked imprudent, in its prosecution they are marked fools; neither rash promise, nor wrong resolve lays obligation upon any man; and yet some will on this account continue in their sulkiness, and carry on in their shortsightedness, wishing to be known as constant in their idiocy.

262 Know how to forget, even though more luck than art. The things best forgotten, are those best remembered, for memory plays the villain by forsaking us when we need her most, and the clown, by appearing when we would see her least; in all that gives pain she is most generous, and in all that might give joy, most niggardly; at times the only remedy for an evil lies in forgetting it, and to be able to forget is the remedy; wherefore, train your memory to

such comfortable manners, for she can bring you heaven, or hell: those self-satisfied are of course excepted, for in their state of innocence, they are already possessed of a childlike felicity.

263 Many of the things that bring delight should not be owned. They are more enjoyed if another's, than if yours; the first day they give pleasure to the owner, but in all the rest to others: what belongs to another rejoices doubly, and this without the risk of damage, and with the excitement of novelty, for everything grows better through fasting, even the drink from another being judged nectar; the possession of things, not only diminishes their enjoyment, but augments their annoyance, whether shared, or not shared, for an owner is only the steward for others, and they are more foemen retrieving their own, than men grateful for what was bestowed.

No days of indolence; fate likes to play the buffoon, and to upset everything unawares in order to catch the sleeping; always stand ready for inspection in spirit, in mind, in fortitude, even in appearance, for the day that these are left to themselves becomes the day of their downfall; alertness when most necessary, is always missing, and not to give the matter a thought is to be slated for destruction; it has always been the strategy of another's watchfulness to call out your qualifications for most rigorous inspection, when in undress. The days for the parade are known, and sharp judgment ignores them; but on the day least expected, she summons them in order to discover their real worth. 264

Know how to put fire under your subordinates. The need of doing something, upon occasion, has made giants of many, just as the 265

danger of drowning has made swimmers; in such circumstance many have discovered a courage, and even a capacity, which would have remained buried in their faint-heartedness, if the emergency had not offered: dangers are the opportunities for fame, and when a nobleman sees his honor threatened, he has the energy of a thousand. Queen Isabela the Catholic knew and knew well, this law, as she knew all the others, of laying responsibility upon her subjects, and it was to such politic favor that the Great Captain owed his name, and many others their eternal glory; by such subtilty did she make men great.

266 Do not become insipid by being too sweet: for such is he who never becomes outraged: men so insentient are hardly men; not always is this born of sloth, but often of incapacity: proper feeling upon occasion, marks the man, for

the birds at once amuse themselves of the scarecrow. To let the acrid alternate with the sweet, is the proof of good taste; the sweet alone is for children, and fools; it is a grave disease, to be reduced through pure goodness to feelinglessness of feeling.

267 Quiet words, with tenderness of heart, for thorns pierce the body, but hard words, the spirit; a good cake gives good odor to the breath; the great trick of life to know how to sell the air; most things are paid for in words, and they suffice to pay off the impossible debt: heavenly business is done with the heavens and life-giving words give life: always carry a mouth full of sugar to sweeten the speech, that it may be found good even to your enemies: for the only way to be amiable is to be affable.

268 A wise man does at once, what a fool does at last. Both do the same

thing; only at different times, the first in season, and the second out. He who starts by putting on his understanding wrong side to, continues in this style ever afterwards, wearing about his feet what he should have placed upon his head, making left of what is right, and so proceeding in everything he does: there is only one good way to bring him to account, and that is to make him do by compulsion what he should have done through desire: but the man of sense sees at once, what sooner or later, must be, and does it to his joy, and to his credit.

269 Capitalize your novelty; for as long as you are deemed new, you rate high. The novel stands well everywhere because it is different, and refreshing to the taste, wherefore the brand-new mediocrity is more cherished than the shop-worn perfection. The best of things grow grubby, and become

old: only note that this glory of the new is short-lived, and that in four days respect for it will fade; know, therefore, how to make use of these first days of approval, how to catch this acclaim in its flight and seize all that is justly yours; for when the flame of the new is spent, ardor cools, and the excitement of the young will have to be exchanged for the boredom of the old; believe then that all that is yours also has its day, and that it passes.

Do not alone condemn what 270
pleases the many. It must have some good, to be satisfying to so many, and even though it cannot be explained, it does give joy: the man who stands apart is always despised, and when he is wrong, he becomes ridiculous; such action serves more to discredit your judgment, than the object, and so you are likely to be left alone in your bad taste; if you

do not know how to strike upon the good, conceal your stupidity, and do not condemn wholesale; for bad taste is ordinarily the child of ignorance: what all say, either is so, or is wished so.

271 Let him who knows little, play safe, whatever his job, and even though he be not adjudged smart, he will be adjudged sound. He who knows much may take a chance, and let his imagination roam; but he who knows little, and takes chances, voluntarily tries suicide; keep always to the right, for what is established as right cannot be wrong; the king's highway is fixed for the simpleton, and this law for everybody, know he much, or know he little, that there is better sense in safety, than in singularity.

272 Sell your stuff at the price of courtesy, for it imposes the heaviest obligation; never can the de-

mand of a dealer raise the price to what is paid freely by the satisfied customer: courtesy not only pays, but it pledges, and it is gallant manner that places the greatest obligation; nothing costs a man of conscience more, than something given him, for it is sold him twice, and at a double price, that of its own value, and that of politeness. Nevertheless it remains true, that to men of mean spirit such nobility is mere gibberish, for they do not understand the idioms of good style.

Understand the spirit of those with whom you deal. In order to grasp their intent, for if the cause is well-understood, the effect is known; and from the first, the motive for the latter is discerned. The melancholic perpetually augurs disaster, and the defamer, crime, in either instance the worst of what may be in the offing, for unable to encompass the existent

273

good, each forecasts the possible evil: the man of passion always speaks of things far differently from what they are, for he uses the terms of passion and not those of reason; thus does everyone babble according to his feelings, or his mood, and all, very far from the truth; know how to read a face, and to decipher a soul from its lineaments; hold him who laughs ceaselessly as fool, and him who never laughs as false, on guard against the inquisitor, either because he is frivolous, or a spy; expect little good of men misborn, for they are given to revenging themselves upon nature, and as she showed little regard for them, they show little regard for her. Even so does a man tend to be the fool, as he is fair of face.

274 Have something attractive about you, for it is the magic of civil intercourse; use this smooth hook more to gain good will, than your

advantage, but use it for everything; merit is not enough, if it is not made to count through opportunity, for this is what brings forth acclaim; to have the cut, is to carry the best sceptre of rule, which even though most a matter of luck, can be helped by art, for where the ground is already rich, fertilization works better; such means create popular yearning, even to winning the hearts of all.

Join in, but not indecently. Not always the lead, and not always the clown, is to play the part of the gentleman, and some concession may be made to decorum in order to gain a bit of public favor: at times try to go as far as the crowd goes; but without becoming indecent: for he who is counted the fool in public will not be voted the sage in secret: more may be lost in one day of folly than can be regained in a whole period of seriousness; but on this 275

account do not forever stand apart; for to be thus singular is to condemn the others; much less act the prude, leaving this to its own sex, for even those too full of piety are ridiculous; the best a man can do is to appear the man, for a woman may play the man to perfection, but not the other way about.

276 Know how to refresh the spirit, through nature and through art; once in every seven years, so they say, we are made over, let it mark an elevation and realization of better taste: with the first seven years the intelligence enters, with each succeeding seven let some new virtue shine forth, and take note of this natural change in order to help it along, looking always toward improving the rest as well; of this it comes, that many vary their deportment either with their social status or their business; and at times this goes unnoticed, until the alteration has

become excessive; at twenty, man is a peacock, at thirty a lion, at forty a camel, at fifty a snake, at sixty a dog, at seventy an ape, and at eighty, nothing.

A man of show. Show is the spotlight for the talents. There is a moment for every one of them: seize it, for not every day will be its day of triumph. There are armored knights of whom the little shines forth much, and the much bedazzles. When now to such great gifts is added an ability to display them, these men pass as prodigies. There are nations that know how to put on, and Spain is the one that does it superlatively. It was light that first revealed the whole of creation, and it is show that gives satisfaction, that supplies much and that gives a second life to everything, especially when joined to reality. The heavens from which springs every perfect thing, give to each its perfect

setting, for either without the other would be sacrilege: only, exhibition requires art. Even that which is most excellent is dependent upon its surroundings, and every day is not its day. Show fares badly when out of season, for no attribute demands more freedom from affectation, for it perishes upon this, because so close to vanity, and this to cheapness: all ostentation must be much tempered, that it descend not to the vulgar, for to the understanding its excess is discredited. It reveals itself best at times in a silent eloquence, in a careless revelation of some high quality; wise concealment makes the most effective of parades, because such very secrecy most piques curiosity into life. A great trick, of yours, not to make known all you have at once, but allow frequent peeps, always bringing forward more. For one accomplishment must be

the pledge of another and a greater, and the applause for the first, a welcome to those to follow.

Avoid all badges: for when they serve to mark you, even your distinctions become defects. All are the fruit of peculiarity, which always makes for criticism: for the singular is left alone. Even beauty, when too surpassing, loses caste; whatever attracts notice, gives offence, especially in matters already of bad repute. But some seek prominence in these very vices, hunting for notoriety in villainy, in order so to assure themselves an infamous fame. Even judgment, when too refined, degenerates into mere babble. 278

Do not argue with an arguer. You must decide whether the argument springs from astuteness, or from vulgarity. It is not always stubbornness, but perhaps a trick. Pay heed, therefore, not to en- 279

tangle yourself in the one, while disentangling yourself from the other. No precaution more in order, than that against spies; and against the lockpickers of the soul, no better countertrick, than to leave the key of caution inside the door.

280 A man of principle. Right dealing is finished: truth is held the liar; good friends are few; for the best of service, the worst of pay; and this is the style the world over today. Whole nations are committed to evil dealing; with one you fear insecurity; with another, inconstancy, with a third, treason; wherefore, let this bad faith of others serve you, not as example, but as warning. The peril of the situation lies in the unhinging of your own integrity, at the sight of such baseness in conduct: but the man of principle never forgets what he is, because of what others are.

The grace of those who understand. More to be cherished is the lukewarm Yes of one man than the cheers of a whole crowd: because the belch of the froward, is not elevating: the sages speak with understanding, and so their praise brings lifelong satisfaction. Wise Antigonus reduced the whole theatre of his fame to one Zeno, and Plato called Aristotle his whole school. Some heed only to fill their stomachs, albeit with the worst of rubbish. Even the rulers need the grace of biographers, and they fear their pens more, than ugly women a painter's brush. 281

Use your absence, to increase the respect, or the honor in which you are held. If presence serves to diminish glory, absence serves to increase it. He who when absent was counted a lion, when present was counted ridiculous, and as something the mountain brought 282

forth; the great attributes lose their lustre, when handled; for it is easier to see the husk than the rich interior of a spirit. The imagination goes far beyond what is glimpsed, and fraud, which commonly enters through the ears, has a way of going out through the eyes; he who keeps himself in the half-way place of public opinion regarding himself, keeps his reputation, for even the Phoenix makes capital of his absence in order to plume himself, and of the cry for him, in order to gain acclaim.

283 A man of inventive mind. It is the mark of the greatest genius, but who can be such without a grain of dementia? Inventiveness springs from genius: but good choice from the intelligence. The former is a gift of heaven, and most rare, but discrimination is given to many; the talent for discovery is the lot of very few: and

only of the first in excellence, or in time. The new gives joy, and when of happy turn it puts a double halo upon the good. In matters of judgment it is dangerous, for seemingly paradoxical; but in matters of genius, it is laudable, and when either succeeds deserving of all praise.

284 Not obtrusive, in order not to be slighted. Respect yourself, if you would be respected. Better too niggardly, than too free with yourself. Arrive desired, in order to arrive welcomed. Never come without being invited, and never go without being sent. He who plows ahead on his own, if the thing goes badly, reaps all the indignation; and if it goes well, none of the thanks. The too froward is the lowest of the low, who because he pushes himself in with effrontery, is pushed out with confusion.

285 Do not perish of another's misery. Beware of him who is stuck in the mud, and note that he calls to you, in order to comfort himself in your mutual unhappiness. Such men are on the hunt for those who will help them carry their misfortune: and to those to whom in their prosperity they turned a shoulder, they today stretch out a hand. Great coolness is necessary with the drowning, if you would bring them help without peril to yourself.

286 Not beholden for everything, or to everybody, for that is to be a slave, and a common slave. Some are born more blessed than others: the one that he may do more good, and the other than he may better receive it. Independence is more precious, than any gift for which you may forfeit it. More satisfying far, that many depend upon you, than that you depend upon anyone. The power to com-

mand has only this advantage, the power to do greater good. But be most careful not to mistake as favor an obligation put upon you, for usually the other's astuteness has so managed it, that it will so appear.

287 Do nothing in passion, or everything goes wrong. He cannot work for himself, who is not in command of himself and passion invariably banishes reason. Here have recourse to another more prudent, who may be anyone, provided unimpassioned. They who look on always see more, than those who are in the play, for they are not excited. As quickly as you discover yourself roused, let intelligence blow the retreat, for the blood has hardly rushed into the head, before all you do shows blood, and in one brief moment is spewed forth the substance of many days of shame for you, and another's slander.

288 Live as circumstance permits. All rule, all converse, everything must be determined by the contingency. Wish for what offers, for time and tide wait for no man. Do not journey through life by statute, even when such has the face of virtue, or indicate in terms too precise what alone will satisfy you, for tomorrow you may have to drink of the water that you disdained today. There are some so perverse, that they would have every circumstance of life fit itself to their vagaries, and not the other way about: the man of wisdom knows better, and that the polar star of prudence is found by comporting himself according to the circumstance.

289 The greatest defect in man, to give sign that he is a man, for he ceases to be held divine, from the day that he lets himself be seen human. Imprudence is the head wind of renown. Just as the man

of reserve is held to be more than human; so the light-headed is held to be less. There is no shortcoming, that cheapens more, for frivolousness stands directly opposed to earnestness. A fool can never be a man of substance, especially if an old fool, when his years oblige him to have sense: this fault is the fault of many, but it cannot be denied that it is singularly demeaning.

290 A rare joy, to couple esteem with affection, but be not too much loved, if you would maintain the respect in which you are held: love is more bold than hatred: and affection, and veneration, do not marry well; even though you may not be too much feared, you may not be too much loved, either. Affection ushers in familiarity, and for every step that she takes forward, respect takes one backward. Better to be loved appreciatively than devotedly, for that

is the love more befitting the great.

291 Know how to analyze a man. The alertness of the examiner is matched against the reserve of the examined. But great judgment is called for, to take the measure of another. More important far, to know the make-up, and the properties of men, than those of herbs, and stones. This is the most delicate of the occupations of life: for the metals are known by their ring, and men by what they speak; words show forth the mind of a man; yet more, his works. To this end the greatest caution is necessary, the clearest observation, the subtilest understanding, and the most critical judgment.

292 What you have must exceed the requirements of your office, and not the other way about. For however high may be your post, you in your person must show

yourself superior to it. A man of great qualifications, tends to grow, and to show this increasingly in his labors. But the man of mean heart, atrophies and soon reaches the end, both of his duties and his reputation. Great Augustus held himself greater as man, than as prince, to which end greatness of spirit avails much, and yet more an intelligent self-confidence.

Of maturity. It gives radiance to the person, yet more to his personality, for as material weight makes precious the gold, moral weight, the man; it is the halo about every talent, and the reason for its veneration. The composure of a man is the façade of his spirit. Not a stolidness with a little waddle, as silly humor would have it, but an authority most serene; it speaks with finality, and acts with effect. It is the picture of the man complete; for each is held as

293

much the man, as he has matured: and he began to be mature, and to carry authority, when he ceased to be a child.

294 Be moderate in opinion. Every man takes his views as suits his interests: and he is filled with reasons for his stand. For, in most instances, judgment gives way before feeling. Thus two opposite opinions come to meet, and each believes that his is the side of reason: but she, always most honest, has never been known to carry two faces. The prudent man goes cautiously in so delicate a situation; and the distrust which he has of himself, moderates his judgment regarding the ways of thought of the other. At such time let him imagine himself placed on the other side: and examine from it the arguments, when he will not damn the other utterly, nor yet justify himself entirely in what is so puzzling.

Not a blower, but a doer. They make the greatest show of what they have done, who have done least. They make a mystery of everything, and in the silliest fashion. Veritable chameleons for applause, they give everyone his fill of laughter. Vain parade has always been despised, but here it is ridiculous. Like beggars these ants of honor go collecting their great achievements. But real achievement needs least to be affected. Be satisfied with doing, and leave the talk to others. Also bestow your labors, do not sell them: nor with gold rent yourself a pen, for such writes dirt, that sickens the knowing. Aspire to be heroic, rather than only to seem it. 295

A man of quality, and of majesty. The first-rate makes the first-rate man, and one of these counts more than a thousand of the mediocre. There was he who was pleased 296

that all he had was big, even to the kitchen-ware: how much more should the great man strive that the gifts of his spirit be such. In God everything is infinite, everything immeasurable; and so must everything about an hero be great, and majestic; that it comes to be that all his acts, and even his thinking go clothed in one transcendent glory.

297 Deal always as though seen. He is the seeing man, who sees that he is seen, or that he will be seen. He knows that the walls have ears, and that what is evil breaks its fetters to go free. Even when alone, he works as though the eyes of all the world were upon him; because he knows that all comes to be known; thus he regards as witnesses today, those who because of what has been brought to their notice, will be such tomorrow; for unconcerned with what might be seen in his

house from that of another, is only he who longs that a whole world regard him.

298 Three things make the superman and they are the greatest gifts of divine generosity: a fertile mind, a deep understanding, and a cultivated taste. A great advantage, to have a good imagination; but a greater, to be able to think straight. To have a mind for what is good! Genius should not have its being in the spine, where it would be more hard working, than astute. Straight thinking, is the fruit of reason. At twenty years desire rules us, at thirty, expediency, at forty, judgment. There are minds, that radiate light, like the eyes of the lynx, and in the greatest darkness see most clearly. Then there are those born for the occasion, who always strike upon what is most fitting: much awaits them, and a well-blessed harvest.

But good taste lends flavor to all of life.

299 Leave hunger unsated: the cup must be torn from the lips even with its nectar. It is desire that is the measure of value, wherefore it is the trick of good taste, even for the thirst of the body, to satisfy, but not to sate; the good, when small, is doubly good. Great is the fall upon second appearance; and a surfeit of what is most pleasing, is dangerous, for it cheapens eternal quality itself. The only way to please your host, is to leave with an appetite still stimulated by a hunger still retained. If hurt must be felt, let it be that of a desire unsatisfied, rather than that of a satiety disappointed; the happiness suffered for, is doubly sweet.

300 In one word, a saint, for that is to say everything at once. For virtue is the bond of all the perfections,

and the heart of all life's satisfactions. It makes a man sensible, alert, far-seeing, understanding, wise, courageous, considerate, upright, joyous, welcomed, truthful, and a universal idol. And three are the S's that make for happiness: saintliness, sanity and sapience. Virtue is the sun of our lesser world, the hemisphere of which is a good conscience. It is so beautiful, that it finds favor of God, and of man. There is nothing lovely without virtue: and nothing hateful without vice: for virtue is the essence of wisdom, and all things else are folly: capacity, and greatness must be measured in terms of virtue, and not in those of fortune. Virtue alone is sufficient unto itself: and it, only, makes a man worth loving in life, and in death, worth remembering.

A Bibliographic Appendix

toda buena, y galante discrecion.

Naturaleza, y arte: materia, y obra. No ay belleza sin ayuda, ni perfeccion que no dè en barbara, sin el realce del artificio, a lo malo socorre, y lo bueno lo perficiona Dexanos comunmente a lo mejor la naturaleza, acojamonos al arte. El mejor natural es inculto sin ella, y les falta la mitad a las perfecciones, si les falta la cultura Todo hombre sabe a tosco sin el artificio, y ha menester pulirse en todo orden de perfeccion.

Obras de intencion, ya segunda, y ya primera. Milicia es

es la vida del hombre contra la malicia del hombre, pelea la sagacidad con estratagemas de intencion Nunca obra lo que indica, apunta si para deslumbrar. amaga al aire con destreza, y executa en la impensada realidad, atenta siempre a desmentir. Echa vna intencion, para assegurarse de la emula atencio, y rebuelue luego contra ella, venciendo por lo impensado. Pero la penetrante inteligencia, la preuiene con atenciones, la azecha con reflexos. entiende siempre lo contrario de lo que quiere que entienda, y conoce luego qualquier intentar de falso. dexa pas-

THE *Spanish original from which the foregoing translation was made bears the following title:* I

ORACVLO
MANVAL, Y ARTE
DE PRVDENCIA,
SACADA DE LOS AFO-
rismos que se discurren en las obras de Lorenço Gra-
cîan.
PVBLICALA DON VI-
cencion Iuan de Lastanosa.
Y la dedica.
AL EXCELENTISSIMO
Señor Don Luis Mendez de Haro.

Con licencia, en Madrid, por Maria de Quiñones,
año de 1653.

This title is reproduced as the frontispiece, and facing pages from the body of the text are shown opposite. The vol-

ume constitutes, according to Eduard Grisebach,[1] *the* FIRST *edition of the Master's work even though mine carries an inked-in note (dated 1870) stating it to be the* SECOND *edition of Gracian's classic. The British Museum records, as in its files, another copy of the* ORACULO *identical in title-page, format, paging, etc. with that here described, also printed by Quiñones in Madrid. Mr. H. Thomas, Deputy Keeper in the Department of Printed Books of the British Museum, has written me that it possesses a further copy apparently identical with the Quiñones edition, of the same date, etc., but carrying in addition:*

Vendese en casa de Francisco Lamberto, en la Carrera de San Geronimo.

In comparing the two British copies he ventures to suggest (very modestly but with unquestioned authority, I would say) that the latter volume is

---

[1]*Eduard Grisebach: Schopenhauer's Handschriftlicher Nachlass I, 3ter Abdruck, Leipzig, Verlag von Philipp Reclam jun. (after) 1895.*

the first of the 1653 prints and that the former, and mine, are copies printed in the provinces or actually pirated. While all three are dated 1653 and while, in the body of the text, all three seem identical, the name FRANCISCO ESPADAÑA *in the Quiñones edition not bearing Lamberto's imprint, is twice spelled* ESPAÑA *in the Licencia. The opinion of Mr. Thomas seems justified, therefore, that the Lamberto imprint is the original of the 1653 editions.*

In the application for license to print, reference is made to a previous appearance of the ORACULO, *on which grounds the bibliographic authorities (Latassa,*[2] *for example) declare the 1653 prints, second editions. There exists, however, no copy of an earlier printing to prove the point, and as much of the matter in the* ORACULO, *as indicated by the title page and the introduction by Lastanosa, was "col-*

[2]*Felix de Latassa: Bibliotecas de Latassa por Don Miguel Gomez Uriel, Zaragoza, 1884.*

lected" from the "twelve" books of Gracian, the existence of an edition dated 1647 is hardly proved. In this year Gracian had written only four of his total series, and the first of the three volumes that constitute his EL CRITICON *did not appear until 1650, nor the last two, until 1653. But whether a first or a second edition, the 1653 printing is the best assurance that we have left of possible personal editorship, for Gracian did not die until five years later.*

II *Gracian perished in 1658, aged approximately fifty-seven. These facts are of importance only for those who would know at what period in his life he published his various texts or by what number of years the reprints thereof most commonly available antedate or postdate his death. The following is a listing of his works as given by Latassa for the years preceding Gracian's banishment to Tarazona:*

EL HÉROE. *Madrid, 1630.* (?)
Another and better authenticated edition is marked, Huesca, por Juan Nogués, 1637. Reprints appear as Madrid, 1639; Barcelona, 1640. A French translation by Gervais is dated Paris, 1645; and an English, by Sir J. Skeffington, London, 1652.

EL POLITICO DON FERNANDO EL CATÓLICO.
Zaragoza, 1640.
Reprinted, Zaragoza, 1641; Huesca, 1646.

AGUDEZA Y ARTE DE INGENIO.
Madrid, 1642. (?)
Reprinted, Huesca, 1648, 1649.

EL DISCRETO.
Huesca, por Juan Nogués, 1645.
Reprinted, Barcelona, 1647.

ORACULO MANUAL Y ARTE DE PRUDENCIA.
Huesca, por Juan Nogués, 1647. (?)
**Reprinted, Madrid, 1653.*

EL CRITICON.
Primera Parte. *Madrid, 1650.*
Segunda Parte. *Huesca, 1653.*
Tercera Parte. *Huesca, 1653.*
Reprinted, Madrid, 1658.

EL COMULGADOR.
Zaragoza, por Juan de Ibár, 1655.
Reprinted, Madrid, 1655.

Two volumes of poetry commonly ascribed to Gracian but not published in collected form until after his death are the following:

DIVERSOS POEMAS.
(*a section of the Obras*)
Madrid, por Pablo de Val, 1664.

SELVAS DE TODO EL AÑO.
(*a section of the Obras*)
Barcelona, por Josef Gailart, 1734.

The date of first appearance in printed form of practically every work of Gracian is a matter of debate. With one or two exceptions, all are hidden or lost and the fact of their former existence, therefore, depends upon deductions made from stray remarks occurring in the later writings of Gracian or biographic notes of the period which concern his life. Those which the modern reader may be surest of, are, therefore, the allegedly later reprints of his works that still antedate his death, or those collections of his total contributions which appeared immediately thereafter. The

bibliographic list that follows is synthesized from Latassa, Eduard Grisebach and Joseph Jacobs.[3] *After the complete* OBRAS, *the literary history of the* ORACULO *only is sketched and its various translations. As the accuracy of the citations of these even is often a matter of question, a star has been placed before those that have been verified directly.*

*ORACVLO MANVAL, Y ARTE DE PRVDENCIA. *Madrid, por Maria de Quiñones, 1653.*

*ORACVLO MANVAL, Y ARTE DE PRVDENCIA. *Amsterdam, en casa de Ivan Blaev, 1659.*
This is the first recorded reprint to be published immediately after Gracian's death. It is the text used by Schopenhauer for his famous translation and contains in addition, El Héroe (newly corrected) and El Politico D. Fernando (a reprint of the Nogués, Huesca, 1646 text).

---

[3]*Joseph Jacobs: Gracian's, The Art of Worldly Wisdom, London, Macmillan and Co., 1892.*

**OBRAS DE GRACIAN.*
Dos Tomos.
Madrid, por Pablo de Val, 1664.
The Oraculo appears in the first volume.
_____ Dos Tomos.
Barcelona, por Pablo de Val, 1667.
_____ Amberes, 1669.
** _____ Dos Tomos.*
Madrid, Imprenta Real de la Santa Cruzada, 1674.
The Oraculo appears between pages 449-513 of the first volume.
_____ Barcelona, 1700.
** _____ Dos Tomos.*
Amberes, por Henrico y Cornelio Verdussen, 1702.
The Oraculo occupies pages 241-296 in the second volume.
_____ Madrid, 1720.
_____ Amberes, por Juan Bautista Verdussen, 1725.
_____ Barcelona, por Josef Gailart, 1734.
** _____ Dos Tomos.*
Barcelona, por Pedro Escuder y Pablo Nadal, 1748.
Complete, carrying in addition the Selvas del Año. The Oraculo appears on pages 441-506 of the first volume.
_____ Barcelona, Oficina de Maria Angela Marti y Gali, Viuda, 1757.

*_____*Dos Tomos.*
Madrid, en la Imprenta de Pedro Marin, 1773.
Complete, except for the Selvas. The Oraculo appears on pages 560-647 of the first volume.

Between the date of this volume and modern times the books of Gracian, either as collected works or separately, cease to appear in Spanish. Within recent years the ORACULO *has come out in the following forms:*

*ORÁCULO MANUAL.
Madrid, Compañia Ibero-Americano de Publicaciones (after?) 1900.
The reprint is of interest because published as the thirty-third volume of The Hundred Classics of Spanish Literature.

*TRATADOS DE GRACIAN.
Madrid, Casa Editorial Calleja, 1918.
A reprint of the Amsterdam, 1659 text of the Oraculo appears on pages 185-289.

*ORÁCULO MANUAL.
Biblioteca de Autores españoles, Tomo LXV, Madrid, Librería de los Sucesores de Hernando, 1922.
The Oraculo is on pages 570-599.

III *Gracian early found a recognition abroad which fully equalled, if it did not exceed, his fame at home. When it is remembered that half, at least, of the Spanish texts were published outside his native Spain (in the Low-lands, mostly) and when to these is added the almost astounding number of the translations of his works, the interest of the outside world in Gracian assumes colossal proportions. Some of these translations, but only insofar as they concern the* ORACULO *are here listed:*

FRENCH

L'HOMME DE COUR.
Par le Sieur Amelot de la Houssaie.
Paris, 1685.
**_____Quatriéme Ed.*
Paris, Martin Jean Boudot et Etienne Martin, 1687.
**_____Quatriéme Ed.*
Hiene, Andrée Frederic Bötticher, 1692.
**_____Nouvelle Ed.*
Lyon, François Barbier, 1693.
**_____Nouvelle Ed.*
Lyon, François Barbier, 1696.

**_____ Quatriéme Ed.*
La Haye, Abraham Troyel, 1696.
**_____ Cinquiéme Ed.*
La Haye, Abraham Troyel, 1701.
**_____ Septiéme Ed. Rotterdam, Jean Hofhout, 1716.*
**_____ Huitiéme Ed. Rotterdam, Jean Hofhout, 1728.*

**MAXIMES DE BALTAZAR GRACIEN.*
Traduites de L'Espagnol, par le Pere Courbeville.
Paris, Rollin fils, 1730.
A closer translation of the Oraculo into French than de la Houssaie's.

**L'HOMME DE COUR.*
Traduit et commenté, par Amelot de la Houssaie.
Paris, Léopold Collin, 1808.
**_____ Paris, L'Imprimeur Léon Pichon, 1924.*
**_____ Paris, Bernard Grasset, 1924.*

De la Houssaie's translation of the ORACULO *into French, while not the first of such translations into other European languages, is the most important, because, with the exceptions noted, all subsequent translations of*

the ORACULO *were derived, not from the original Spanish, but from de la Houssaie's French version (and thus came to include, for the most part, all his notes, additions, textual distortions, philosophic disquisitions and scholastic heaviness).*

ITALIAN

ORACOLO MANUALE, E ARTE DI PRUDENZA.
Dedicato all' Leonardo Pesaro.
Anonymous (?). *Venetia, 1679.*
_____ *Venetia, 1690.*

**L'HUOMO DI CORTE, O SIA L'ARTE DI PRUDENZA.*
From the French of de la Houssaie by Francesco Tosques. Two volumes in one.
Venezia, Gabriel Hertz, 1703.
**_____Two volumes.*
Venezia, Gabriel Hertz, 1708.
**_____Two volumes in one.*
Venezia, Giacomo Hertz, 1734.
**_____Two volumes in one.*
Venezia, Giacomo Hertz, 1740.

RUSSIAN

**THE COURTIER.*
From the French of de la Houssaie

by Sergei Volchkoff. Second Edition. St. Petersburg, 1760.

ENGLISH

**THE COURTIERS MANUAL ORACLE, OR, THE ART OF PRUDENCE.*
Anonymous.
London, printed by M. Flesher for Abel Swalle, 1685.
_____ London, 1694.

THE ART OF PRUDENCE; OR, A COMPANION FOR A MAN OF SENSE.
Made English and illustrated with de la Houssaie's notes by Mr. Savage.
London, 1702.
**_____Second Edition, corrected. London, Jonah Bowyer, 1705.*
_____Third Edition. London, 1714.

**THE ART OF WORLDLY WISDOM BY BALTHASAR GRACIAN.*
Translated from the Spanish 1659 Amsterdam text by Joseph Jacobs.
Macmillan and Company, London and New York, 1892.
Reprinted. 1904.
Reprinted. 1913.

LATIN

Two (the earlier with a reprint) issued after 1731, and both apparently

dependent upon de la Houssaie's French version are listed by Grisebach as in the Catalogue of Printed Books in the British Museum.

HUNGARIAN

Two, issued after 1770, are listed by Grisebach as in the British Museum.

GERMAN

L'HOMME DE COUR ODER DER HEUTIGE POLITISCHE WELT- UND STAATSWEISE, FÜRGESTELLET VON BALTHASAR GRACIAN,
. . . in unsre hochteutsche Sprache übersetzet, anitzo . . . vermehret . . . von Joh. Leonhard Sauter.
Franckfurth und Leipzig, 1687.
Cited by Grisebach as in the collection of the Royal Library in Berlin and as translated from the French.

HOMME DE COUR ODER: KLUGER HOF- UND WELTMANN,
. . . nach Houssaie in's Teutsche übersetzet von Selintes. Augspurg, 1711.
According to Grisebach, the pen name of C. Weissbach.

ORACUL; D. I. REGELN DER KLUGHEIT.
Aus dem Spanischen von A. F. Müller.
2 Bände. Leipzig, 1715-1717.
_____Zweite Aufl. Leipzig, 1733.

**UOMO DI CORTE ODER KLUGER HOF- UND WELTMANN.*
Nach . . . Francisci Tosques seiner Italiänischen Version ins Teutsche übersetzet . . . mit . . . Anmerkungen von Christoph Heinrich Freiesleben.
Altenburg, Johann Ludwig Richtern, 1723.
Since Tosques' translation is from de la Houssaie, this German version is three times removed from the original Spanish.

DIE KUNST ZU LEBEN.
Vortreffliche Regeln etc. Anonymous.
Leipzig, Weygand, 1786.
According to Grisebach this contains only two-thirds of the maxims of the original Oraculo and these in modernized German from Selintes' (Weissbach's) translation from the French.

DER MANN VON WELT
. . . frei bearbeitetes vollständig hinterlassenes Manuscript von K. H. Heydenreich, herausgegeben von K. G. Schelle. Leipzig, Martini, 1803.

**TASCHENBUCH FÜR FREUNDE DER LEBENSKLUGHEIT,*
frei bearbeitet von Karl Heinrich Heydenreich, herausgegeben von K. G. Schelle.
Reutlingen, J. J. Mäkensche Buchhandlung, 1806.

DAS SCHWARZE BUCH ODER LEHREN DER LEBENSWEISHEIT.
Anonymous. 1826.

**MÄNNERSCHULE.*
Aus dem Spanischen übersetzt von Fr. Kölle. Stuttgart, Verlag der J. B. Metzler'schen Buchhandlung, 1838.
"Eine Pfuscherarbeit" in the opinion of Grisebach.

**HAND-ORAKEL UND KUNST DER WELTKLUGHEIT*
. . . aus dem Spanischen Original treu und sorgfältig übersetzt von Arthur Schopenhauer (Nachgelassenes Manuscript.) Herausgegeben von Julius Frauenstädt.
Leipzig, F. A. Brockhaus, 1862.
The first printing of Schopenhauer's classic translation. Made in 1832, the original manuscript in the hands of J. G. Keil sought a publisher for seven years, only to fail. Schopenhauer died in 1860. This is, there-

fore, the first of the posthumous printings of the Schopenhauer text. "Einen durchweg unzuverlässigen Abdruck der Handschrift" according to Grisebach.

**_____Herausgegeben von Eduard Grisebach. Leipzig, Philipp Reclam jun. 1890.*

The authorized and authoritative text of the Schopenhauer translation.

_____Zweiter Abdruck. 1895.

**_____Herausgegeben von Heinrich Schmidt. Leipzig, Alfred Kröner Verlag, (after?) 1900.*

The Schopenhauer text compared with the original Spanish and corrected to suit the taste of some carping critics. A volume which deservedly is in its twenty-fifth thousand.

DUTCH

A translation by M. Smallegange is cited by Jacobs as published in The Hague in 1696.

POLISH

A translation (from the original Spanish?) appearing in Cracow, 1802, by Count Sierakowski is cited by Jacobs.

Index

Page

Introduction 1

A Truthtelling Manual 15

1 *Everything today has its point* 17

2 *Mind and spirit* 17

3 *Maintain an air of uncertainty* ... 17

4 *Wisdom, and courage with it make great* 18

5 *Create dependents* 19

6 *A man at his best* 20

7 *Avoid outshining the master* 20

8 *A man without passion* 21

9 *Belie in yourself the weaknesses of your country* 22

10 *Fortune and fame* 23

11 *Live with those from whom you can learn* 23

12 *Nature and art* 24

13 *Accomplish your ends* 25

14 *The substance, and the form* 26

15 *Have helpful spirits about you* 27

16 *Knowledge with good intent* 28

17 *Change your style* 29

18 *Industry, and Minerva* 29

19 *Do not enter when too much is anticipated* 30

Page

20 *A man of your century* 31
21 *The art of being lucky* 32
22 *A man well-informed* 32
23 *To be flawless* 33
24 *Harness the imagination* 34
25 *Of sound understanding* 35
26 *Discover each man's thumbscrew* .. 35
27 *Rate the intensive above the extensive* 36
28 *In nothing vulgar* 37
29 *A just man* 38
30 *Take no part in foolish enterprises* . 39
31 *Know the lucky* 39
32 *Be gracious* 40
33 *Know how to draw away* 41
34 *Know your chief asset* 42
35 *Think* 42
36 *Know the measure of your luck* ... 43
37 *Know what wimbling is* 44
38 *Say farewell to luck when winning* . 45
39 *Recognize things when at their best* 46
40 *The good will of men* 46
41 *Never exaggerate* 47
42 *A ruler born* 48
43 *Think as the few, and speak as the many* 49

Page

44 *A sympathy with great men* 50
45 *Be shrewd, but not too shrewd* 51
46 *Temper your antipathies* 52
47 *Avoid affairs of honor* 52
48 *A man of substance* 53
49 *A man of insight, and of judgment* 54
50 *Do nothing to make you lose respect for yourself* 55
51 *A man of discernment* 55
52 *Never to lose your head* 56
53 *Diligent, and intelligent* 57
54 *Have strength of spirit* 57
55 *A man who can wait* 58
56 *Have good impulses* 59
57 *That done with deliberation is done quickly enough* 60
58 *Know how to change your front* ... 60
59 *Make a good exit* 61
60 *Just in judgment* 62
61 *Preëminence in what is best* 62
62 *Work with good tools* 63
63 *Excellent, to be first in any line* ... 64
64 *To know how to escape grief* 65
65 *Of cultivated taste* 66
66 *Keep in mind the happy ending* ... 67
67 *Choose an occupation that brings distinction* 68

Page

68 *To jog the understanding is a greater feat, than to jog the memory.* 69
69 *Not the slave of vulgar moods....* 70
70 *Know how to say No.....* 71
71 *Not eccentric.....* 72
72 *A man of decision.....* 73
73 *Know the meaning of evasion.....* 74
74 *Not unapproachable.....* 75
75 *Choose an heroic ideal.....* 76
76 *Not in a chronic state of mockery..* 76
77 *Know how to be all things to all men.....* 77
78 *Care in execution.....* 78
79 *Of happy mind.....* 79
80 *On guard when seeking information* 79
81 *Know how to renew your glitter...* 80
82 *Drink nothing to the dregs.....* 81
83 *Allow yourself some pardonable defect.....* 81
84 *Know how to profit through your enemies.....* 82
85 *Do not be the ace.....* 83
86 *Forestall evil gossip.....* 84
87 *Culture, and polish.....* 85
88 *Generous in action.....* 86
89 *A just estimate of yourself.....* 87

Page
90 *The art of living well* 88
91 *Proceed only when without misgivings* 88
92 *Of better sense* 89
93 *An all-round man* 90
94 *Of unmeasured capacity* 90
95 *Know how to keep anticipation alive* 91
96 *Of conscience* 92
97 *Attain, and maintain a reputation* 92
98 *Hide your purpose* 93
99 *The real, and the apparent* 93
100 *A man without illusions* 94
101 *Half the world laughs at the other half* 94
102 *A maw for large slices of fortune* .. 95
103 *Each, in his way, majestic* 96
104 *Know what the offices hold* 97
105 *Not a bore* 98
106 *Do not make a show of what you have* 99
107 *Display no self-satisfaction* 100
108 *The shortest road to being something* 101
109 *Not the accuser* 102
110 *Do not wait to be the sun, in its setting* 103
111 *Have friends* 104

Page

112 *Gain grace*.....105
113 *Prepare yourself in fortune, for adversity*.....106
114 *Never a rival*.....107
115 *Accustom yourself to the defects of those about you*.....108
116 *Deal solely with men of honor*....108
117 *Never talk about yourself*.....109
118 *Gain the name of being a gentleman*.....110
119 *Do not make yourself an object of hatred*.....111
120 *Live according to custom*.....112
121 *Do not make a business of the trivial*.....113
122 *Distinction, in speech and in action*.114
123 *A man without affectation*.....114
124 *Strive to be in demand*.....116
125 *Not a registrar of evil*.....117
126 *He is not a fool who commits foolishness*.....117
127 *A charm in everything*.....118
128 *Of lofty ambition*.....119
129 *Never cry about your woes*.....120
130 *Do, and exhibit your doing*.....121
131 *Greatness of feeling*.....121
132 *Know the value of reconsideration*.122

Page

133 *Better a fool with the crowd, than a sage by yourself* 123

134 *Possess yourself of the necessities of life twice over* 124

135 *Do not carry a spirit of contradiction* 125

136 *Put yourself in the middle of things* . 126

137 *Let the wise man be sufficient unto himself* 126

138 *The sense to let things settle* 127

139 *Know your unlucky days* 128

140 *Hit at once upon the good in everything* 130

141 *Do not be your own audience* 131

142 *Never out of stubbornness hold to the wrong side* 132

143 *Do not fall into the paradoxical* . . 133

144 *Further another's plan, to accomplish your own* 134

145 *Do not exhibit your sore finger* 135

146 *Look beneath* 136

147 *Open to suggestion* 137

148 *Have the art of conversation* 138

149 *Know how to let the blame slip upon another* 139

150 *Know how to sell your wares* 140

151 *Think ahead* 141

Page

152 *Never accompany him who can overshadow you*.....142
153 *Beware of entering to fill a large gap*.....143
154 *Slow to believe, and slow to cherish*.144
155 *Art, in rising to passion*.....145
156 *Friends by choice*.....146
157 *Do not be deceived in men*.....147
158 *Know how to get the best out of your friends*.....148
159 *Know how to suffer fools*.....149
160 *Mark your words*.....150
161 *Know your pet weaknesses*.....150
162 *Know how to triumph over the envious*.....151
163 *Never through sorrow for their unhappiness involve yourself in the lot of the unfortunate*.....152
164 *Stick your finger in the air*.....153
165 *Make a clean fight*.....154
166 *Distinguish the man of words from the man of deeds*.....155
167 *Know how to help yourself*.....156
168 *Do not fall into the class of the colossal asses*.....156
169 *Note that a miss counts more than an hundred strikes*.....157

Page

170 *Know how, in all matters, to keep something in reserve*.....158

171 *Do not waste favor*.....158

172 *Do not engage with him who has nothing to lose*.....159

173 *Not too fragile in rubbing up against the world*.....160

174 *Do not live at too great pace*.....161

175 *A man of substance*.....162

176 *Know, or hearken to him who does*.164

177 *Avoid familiarities in the daily round*.....164

178 *Trust to your heart*.....165

179 *Reserve is the mark of capacity*...166

180 *Never be misled by what your foe does*.....167

181 *Without lying, do not speak the whole truth*.....168

182 *A bit of audacity in everything*...168

183 *Hold to nothing too violently*.....170

184 *Do not stand on ceremony*.....171

185 *Never risk your reputation on one roll of the dice*.....171

186 *Know what is evil, no matter how worshipped it may be*.....172

187 *All that gains approval, do yourself*.173

188 *To be the bearer of good report, is proof of your good taste*.....174

Page

189 *Know how to make use of another's want*.....175

190 *Find consolation in everything*....176

191 *Do not consider an account squared by mere excess of courtesy*.....177

192 *A man of peace, a man of years*..178

193 *Look to him who comes with another's concern*.....178

194 *A proper conceit of yourself*.....179

195 *Know appreciation*.....180

196 *Know your star*.....181

197 *Do not saddle yourself with fools*..182

198 *Be known as transplantable*.....183

199 *Know how to make a place for yourself through merit*.....184

200 *Leave something to be desired*....184

201 *Fools all who seem it, and the half of those who do not*.....185

202 *Words, and deeds make the consummate man*.....186

203 *Recognize the great of your period*.186

204 *Approach the easy as though it were difficult*.....187

205 *Know the value of disdain*.....188

206 *It happens that the vulgar is everywhere*.....189

207 *Use self-restraint*.....190

Page

208 *Do not die of the fool's sickness*...191

209 *To keep free of the popular inanities, marks particularly good sense*..192

210 *Know how to deal out the truth*...193

211 *In heaven all is gladness*.....194

212 *Keep the ultimate refinements of your art to yourself*.....194

213 *Know how to argue*.....195

214 *Having committed one blunder, do not make it two*.....197

215 *Watch him who works by indirection*.....197

216 *Be able to express yourself*.....198

217 *Neither love, nor hate without end*.199

218 *Never act through obstinacy*.....200

219 *Do not be held a cheat*.....201

220 *When unable to wear the lion's skin, clothe yourself in the fox's*.202

221 *Do not be the cause of embarrassment*.....203

222 *A man self-controlled*.....203

223 *Not too individual*.....204

224 *Know how to take things*.....205

225 *Know your chief weakness*.....206

226 *Be obliging*.....206

227 *Not the victim of the first impression*.207

228 *Do not be a scandal sheet*.....208

Page

229 *Know how to arrange your life*...209

230 *Open your eyes betimes*.....210

231 *Never exhibit your things half-finished*.....211

232 *Have just a touch of the commercial in you*.....212

233 *Do not fail to catch the other's mood*.....213

234 *Never trust your honor to another without the pawn to his*.....214

235 *Know how to beg*.....214

236 *First make an obligation, of what you are paid for afterwards*....216

237 *Be ignorant of the secrets of those above you*.....216

238 *Know the chink in your armor*....218

239 *Not too smart*.....218

240 *Know how to pretend ignorance*...219

241 *Jokes! Know how to take them, but do not play them*.....220

242 *Pursue your advantage*.....221

243 *Not always the dove*.....222

244 *Know how to engender obligation*.222

245 *Discourse always about the uncommon*.....224

246 *Never make explanation unless asked*.....225

Page

247 *Enjoy a little more, and strive a little less*.....225

248 *Do not let the latest always carry you away*.....226

249 *Do not start life wherewith it should be ended*.....226

250 *When must the opposite be inferred*.227

251 *Employ human means, as though there were no divine*.....228

252 *Neither wholly yours, nor wholly another's*.....228

253 *Somewhat vague*.....229

254 *Do not scorn an evil because it is small*.....230

255 *Know how to do good*.....231

256 *Go prepared, always*.....232

257 *Never arrive at open rupture*.....233

258 *Discover someone to help you shoulder your misfortunes*.....234

259 *Take step against insult*.....235

260 *Neither be, nor give all to anyone*.236

261 *Do not persist in folly*.....236

262 *Know how to forget*.....237

263 *Many of the things that bring delight should not be owned*.....238

264 *No days of indolence*.....239

265 *Know how to put fire under your subordinates*.....239

Page

266 *Do not become insipid by being too sweet*.....240

267 *Quiet words, with tenderness of heart*.....241

268 *A wise man does at once, what a fool does at last*.....241

269 *Capitalize your novelty*.....242

270 *Do not alone condemn what pleases the many*.....243

271 *Let him who knows little, play safe*.244

272 *Sell your stuff at the price of courtesy*.244

273 *Understand the spirit of those with whom you deal*.....245

274 *Have something attractive about you*.....246

275 *Join in, but not indecently*.....247

276 *Know how to refresh the spirit*....248

277 *A man of show*.....249

278 *Avoid all badges*.....251

279 *Do not argue with an arguer*.....251

280 *A man of principle*.....252

281 *The grace of those who understand*.253

282 *Use your absence*.....253

283 *A man of inventive mind*.....254

284 *Not obtrusive, in order not to be slighted*.....255

285 *Do not perish of another's misery*..256

Page
286 *Not beholden for everything,*.....256
287 *Do nothing in passion*.....257
288 *Live as circumstance permits*.....258
289 *The greatest defect man*.....258
290 *A rare joy*.....259
291 *Know how to analyze a man*.....260
292 *What you have must exceed the requirements of your office*.....260
293 *Of maturity*.....261
294 *Be moderate in opinion*.....262
295 *Not a blower, but a doer*.....263
296 *A man of quality, and of majesty*..263
297 *Deal always as though seen*.....264
298 *Three things make the superman*..265
299 *Leave hunger unsated*.....266
300 *In one word, a saint*.....266
A Bibliographic Appendix.....269

THIS BOOK

BALTASAR GRACIAN'S
A TRUTHTELLING MANUAL AND
THE ART OF WORLDLY WISDOM
was designed by Jaques Cattell and George M. Houck; it was set, printed and bound by The Science Press Printing Company of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The type face is 8 and 10 point Bookman and Garamont bold; the type page 13 x 24 picas; the text paper is Emissary Text, Laid Antique; the halftone inserts, Oxford Polar Superfine Coated; the inks used were true black and true vermilion of the American Printing Ink Company; the binding is Tan Fabrikoid with cover design by The Science Press Printing Company

With Thomas Books *careful attention is given to all details of manufacturing and design. It is the Publisher's desire to present books that are satisfactory as to their physical qualities and artistic possibilities and appropriate for their particular use.* Thomas Books *will be true to those laws of quality that assure a good name and good will.*

DATE DUE

~~Lewis~~			
~~McPey~~			

PQ6398 .G308 1934
A truthtelling manual and the art of
Princeton Theological Seminary–Speer Library
1 1012 00004 4430